

# SPUNYARN

From the Strands of a Sailor's Life  
Afloat and Ashore

FORTY-SEVEN YEARS UNDER  
THE ENSIGNS OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AND TURKEY

By

Sir HENRY F. WOODS, K.C.V.O.,

LIEUT. R.N.

Late Admiral and Pasha in the Imperial Ottoman Naval Service,  
Grand Cordon of the *Medijeh* and *Osmanieh*,  
K.C. of the Saxe-Coburg Order.

Aide-de-Camp for some years to the late  
Sultan Abdul Hamid.

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TO THE MEMORY OF  
THOSE WITH WHOM I HAVE WORKED AND  
ASSOCIATED IN THE PAST.



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# Spunyarn

## CHAPTER I

### THE NAVY OF THE OLD DAYS

THERE is not much to interest anyone in my family history, so I will pass it over, merely stating that I come of good old yeoman stock, and that my father was a fine old Master Mariner. My mother had died when I was little more than five years of age, and my earliest recollections are of running about, a bare-footed little fellow, upon the wide-spread sands of Gorey, in Jersey, causing at times the greatest anxiety to my dear old Grand-mother on account of the tides, the rapid flow of which occasionally overwhelmed even men on horseback.

I have never been near the island since those early days, but I can see before me now the straggling village of Gorey, its long jetty, with the *Sea-flower* lying alongside, the last fighting cutter to fly the pennant of the Royal Navy. She and her larger consort, the paddle-steamship *Dasher*, were stationed at the Channel Islands for the protection of our oyster fisheries, then at the height of their prosperity and giving employment to some hundreds of cutter-rigged smacks with full crews of hardy sailor-men, the keen rivalry between whom and the crews of the French fishing-luggers led to disputes that but for the presence of these ships would have ended in sanguinary strife.

I left Jersey when I was about seven years of age, and my father having been given a nomination for me by an influential Naval friend, I was sent, at the age of ten, to the Upper School of Greenwich Hospital, where at that time the very best of education and training for a Naval Officer was to be obtained by those of sufficient mental calibre to assimilate the teaching and stand the grind. That Upper School no longer exists. It was closed many years ago when the organisation of Greenwich Hospital was totally changed. In the course of its existence, however, it supplied the Navy with its most skilful navigators and hydrographers.

We were rather a mixed lot, for as in the case of other scholastic foundations, many nominations were given to persons not at all entitled to receive them. There was, however, a fair proportion of Naval Officers and Merchant-Captain's sons, and as there was no caste feeling, it was easy to pick one's friends.

We were given strict naval discipline, divided off into Companies and Sections, and outside the school hours were kept under the watchful eyes of drill-sergeants armed with canes, of which they were not slow to make use. Over each hundred boys was placed a "Head-Captain," selected by the Naval Lieutenant in command of the whole school, upon recommendations from the Class-Masters, and the Sergeant of the Company to which the boy belonged. Over each section was also a Captain selected in a similar manner. The Head-Captains and their subordinates were appointed by warrants, and wore upon their sleeves a badge bearing the Naval Crown and Anchor. I can still remember the pleasure I felt when I first displayed to the envious eyes of my section the Captain's badge. It was nothing, however, to the thrill of pride that subsequently came with the second one, giving me authority over the whole Company.



We did a lot of drilling, and in addition to class-work were taught seamanship, knotting and splicing, and the handling of sails. For this purpose a full-rigged ship-of-war had been provided; she was not, however, afloat, but stood as if in the water upon a solid foundation of stone in the middle-ground between the two schools. I was a main "royal yardsman," being one of the smallest boys in the school, and I well remember the pride with which I ran aloft to take my station in "manning yards" when the Princess Royal came with her fiancé, the Crown Prince of Prussia, to visit the school. The Prince Frederick William, in his uniform, looked a very handsome fellow, but what struck me about the Princess Royal was the enormous size of her skirt. The Empress Eugenie had recently brought the crinoline into fashion, and this was the first occasion on which one of those voluminous garments had come across my vision, and I gazed with wonder at the manœuvres required to get her in and out of her carriage. Of her face I caught but little more than a glimpse, as she was wearing the "Poke-Bonnet" of the period.

I remained nearly five years at the school, and easily reached and retained the first place in each class, and finally passed out with the fullest marks attainable, winning thereby the silver medal of the school, which bore the effigy of Lord Nelson, a nomination for the Navy as Master's Assistant, and a set of beautiful nautical instruments as well as a sum of money.

The Masters in those days were the navigating officers of the Navy, the "Sailing-Masters" as they were sometimes called, the men who sailed the ships, manœuvred them as required in battle, and had charge of all the masts, sails and rigging. Although holding a subordinate position to the Lieutenants, they were in reality the oldest regular officers of the Royal Navy, the lineal descendants of the old Sea-Captains who, in command of some

traders, fought their way to distant lands all over the ocean, and were employed with their hardy seamen to work the sails of the Royal vessels in time of war whilst soldiers fought the enemy from cumbrous structures above the deck.

With the abolition of the first-class volunteer destined to reach the quarter-deck as a midshipman, and the arrival of the Naval cadet to receive a certain amount of training before going to sea, a great change was also made in the navigating branch, which eventually led to the amalgamation of both classes of what was called the Executive Service. Youngsters were entered as Master's Assistants, to be trained as special navigating officers and pilots, and to attract candidates were placed upon a higher rate of pay than midshipmen.

Having passed the entrance examination, after a few weeks' leave, I found myself appointed to a training-ship for boys stationed at Portsmouth.

This was the *Rollo*, a ten-gun brig of some 350 tons, commanded by Lieutenant Nelson, a collateral descendant of our great naval hero. There were four of us youngsters, and with a Navigating Officer as second in command, an Assistant Surgeon and a Paymaster, we made up the complement of officers. They were very nice to us boys, and I look back at the few months I spent on board as one of the happiest periods of my career in the Navy. I got my sea-legs, and, without any bullying, learned much in the way of good seamanship. We were allowed to handle the sails as officer of the watch, under guidance of the Captain and our second in command, and to work the ships in "tacking" and "wearing," and we learned more in those few months than we could possibly have done in a whole commission on board a larger vessel.

It also gave me the opportunity for acquiring the friendship

towards Spithead, since no one had heard the splash, while it was dusk and with only my head above water, I should not have been seen.

Fortunately I was a good swimmer, and did not lose my head. I struck out towards the ship as I swept past, and just managed to grasp the dinghy, which, fortunately, was lying astern straining at her "painter." I promptly yelled for assistance, as with my sodden garments I found it impossible to get into the boat, and glad I was when the Quartermaster, with a couple of seamen, got the dinghy alongside the gangway ladder, and I was hauled up out of the water.

Apart from my naval studies there are few incidents of my early life I recollect. I do remember, though, that in my younger days I also aspired to theatrical honours as an amateur actor, and on one occasion sacrificed a fine pair of whiskers to appear upon the stage as a maiden lady of a certain age in ringlets. I lost thereby my personal identity for a time, and was cut by many of my fair friends. That, however, did not affect my feelings very much, as I knew it was only a temporary matter.

I was duly coached by one of them in the swishing of my skirts, etc., and how to sit down upon a chair and not show too much in the way of ankles, as was required of all well-brought-up young ladies in those days. It took a little of the gilt off the gingerbread of my enjoyment, however, when my friends all declared that I looked so very like the dear lady who presided over the English High School for Girls at the time. She was a very estimable character and very nice, but no beauty.

Towards the end of the year I found myself appointed as supernumerary to the *Boscawen*, the flagship of the Admiral then in command of the Cape Station, which at that time comprised both the East and the West coasts of the African Continent

from the River Gambia on the one side, to Cape Garde de Feu on the other. The *Boscawen* was one of the very last sailing Line of Battleships to be commissioned, but I never reached her, being ordered for passage with another youngster to the corvette *Archer*, which sailed for Lagos from Plymouth a few days before Christmas in 1858.

At Lagos we met the Commodore of the West Coast, Charles Wise, in his flagship, the *Vesuvius*, and we had barely been two hours at anchor when I received orders, as did also another youngster of the name of Brown, to proceed on board that vessel. It was anything but a pleasant surprise, as the old Commodore was a byword in the Navy for his tyrannical rule. Those were the days when Naval Captains still possessed unlimited powers when afloat and away on solitary cruises. His name was long a terror in the Navy, though I much doubt if there are many living now who knew or ever heard of him.

I believe that the very last man hanged for mutiny in the Royal Navy was upon his account. The event, as I remember the tale told to me when I joined the *Vesuvius*, took place in Malta Harbour, when Commodore Wise was Captain-of-the-Line of Battleship *Queen*. A marine, goaded to a mad desire for revenge on account of the severity of the punishment he had received, fired his musket at him point-blank in his face. He had forgotten, however, to leave the ramrod in the barrel, so the Commodore escaped with no further injury than the blue marks of the powder-grains blown into the flesh of his face, fortunately for him, below the eyes. It was a marvellous escape from being blinded, but he bore the marks all his life, and in an angry mood they showed up very strongly.

I had not been on board very long before I learnt what an unhappy ship she was, and how uncomfortable were the

conditions of life. There were few officers, as none would stay longer than he could possibly help, either getting invalidated or ordered home through influential friends possessing a "pull" at the Admiralty. The First Lieutenant had been put in Coventry by his messmates for tale-bearing to the Commodore of what was said and done in the ward-room, so that none of them spoke to him except on service matters. The only other Lieutenant was on the Sick List, doing his best to get the Doctor to invalid him. In the gun-room—a very dingy side-cabin with two small circular ports and a couple of small deck-lights flush with the planking overhead—there were but two Executive Officers until I joined with my companion: the one a passed midshipman waiting for promotion to acting rank as "Mate"—Sub-Lieutenants being unknown in those days; and the other a Master's Assistant of some three and a half years' standing. In addition to these were the Assistant-Paymaster and the Secretary's Clerk.

It was not long before I came in for my first taste of the Commodore's discipline. I was keeping afternoon-watch, walking up and down the quarter-deck, when I looked over the "gangway" to wave "adieu" to the midshipman of a cutter who had come from the *Archer* in answer to a signal to send for dispatches, and was shoving off. Whispering with his hand to his mouth, "Any news, Joe?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied, leaning over the "bulwark," "we are going to exercise 'shifting topsails' after 'Quarters'—the ceremony which, as a rule, is immediately followed by a time for smoking. I had got this news by over-hearing a chance word of the old man to the First Lieutenant.

The words were hardly out of my mouth before I was startled by the Lieutenant's angry voice at my back, demanding to know what I had said to the Midshipman. "Nothing much," I replied.

"Nothing much! I heard you," he vociferated.

"What's this?" came an enquiry in snarling tones from the Commodore, who had just stepped on deck from the after companion-hatchway.

"Oh, sir, this youngster has just told the Midshipman of the boat going back to the *Archer* that we are going to shift topsails after Quarters."

"He did, did he?" With his eye he rapidly measured the distance between the boat, and then came two sharp commands: "Boatswain's Mate, turn the hands up! Signalman, hoist the signal, 'shift topsails.'" Turning then to me, and pointing up to the "mizen-crossrees," "Go up there, sir, and stay till you're called down!" he shouted.

Up I mounted the rigging, nothing loath, and, in fact, rather inclined to congratulate myself at first. The men were all clustering about the lower parts of the rigging at each mast on both ships. Down came the signal at word of command, and then followed a riot of sound and movement. Jostling, cursing and swearing, as men fell over each other, in their eagerness to win the race in the execution of the evolution, the work went on, and I thought myself fortunate to be out of it.

My joy, however, was of short duration. A tornado was brewing. I saw the black clouds gathering on the horizon, and knew what was coming. The exercise was over. We had beaten the *Archer* by several minutes, and I thought for a moment that the old man's heart might soften. Deuce a bit of it! I heard the order, "Slope awnings!" as I watched the great black wall advancing upon us with its line of seething white water below and the lightning playing between in fantastic flashes; but no summons came from the quarter-deck for me to descend.

Presently the squall struck with a howl, and I clung to the ropes about the mast as I felt the wind rushing past with a force that, with a less strong hold of the cordage about me, might have sent me overboard. It was a wonderful sight, with the sea whipped into foam which flew with the wind over the ship in clouds of mist like steam. It was over in a few minutes; at least the wind, the dangerous part of it, dropped, and then down came the rain, a veritable deluge.

It was as if the bottom had dropped out of an enormous tank aloft; and the canvas of the sloped awnings billowed under the great weight of the falling water. In a second or so I was wet through to the skin. The rain ceased, and then came a hail from below, "Masthead there!" "Aye, aye!" I promptly answered, as in duty bound. "Come down!" I reached the deck and stood before the grim-visaged Commodore. "Are you wet?" he asked. The answer was needless, for I looked like a drowned rat; but I meekly said, "Yes, sir." "Then go and stand there till you are dry," he ejaculated, as he pointed to the "main-bitts."

The "main-bitts," I may explain in these days of steamships were the strong, massive crossed-pieced-columns of hard wood which, projecting from the deck close up to the masts, served for the fastening of the "topsail halliards" and other stout ropes. There were two of these columns on each side within a few inches of each other, and, as finish to their ends, were fitted with flat brass plates that just covered their surface. They were barely the size of an ordinary boot-sole, and to keep one's footing upon them for an hour or so was no light punishment.

The old man walked up and down, casting a sardonic grin in my direction whenever he passed me, and it was not until he had gone below and settled down to his dinner that I ventured to

think I was dry and would not be disobeying orders if I gave up the statue business and left my pedestal. So off I went, and heard no more about it.

A favourite punishment with him was mast-heading, and I spent a good deal of time, at intervals, perched up on the "top-gallant crosstrees." When we were at anchor I didn't mind as long as it was my watch on deck. I used to wind my arms around the ropes with a leg in between as a precaution, since I often found myself dozing away in response to the rocking motion of the mast.

It was a very active and hard existence; a very different one to life in the Navy for many years past. There was no live-stock carried for the gun-room, while even had we the money to pay for sheep or any large amount of poultry, no pens or cages were allowed to junior officers, and we lived chiefly upon ship's provisions. Most of the salt beef and pork had been in barrels knocking about the station for years, and was so tough and stringy, especially the beef, that it required strong teeth and still stronger appetites to deal with it at all as food. The beef, when cold, was as hard as wood, and resembled nothing so much as fine-grained mahogany or rosewood. Indeed, it would take a splendid polish, and could be made into snuff-boxes or other fancy articles.

As for the biscuit, our only bread, for the baker was unknown in those days in the Navy, it was so full of weevils that, as we jokingly remarked, "the only fresh meat we got was in the biscuits," and we used to say there was never any necessity to ask anyone to pass the bread-basket, as all that had to be done was to have a piece of its contents placed on the table in the right direction, and it would walk over to its required destination. But in reality we never ate the weevils if we could help it. The



biscuit was always well-baked in the oven before being brought to table, and before eating it a few hard taps upon the table brought out the little browned carcasses.

• Whenever I have paid a visit to a modern man-o'-war and seen the comfortable surroundings of the junior officers, and the good food provided for all on board, my thoughts have harked back to those days when I so often tramped the quarter-deck in the first watch, eating a meagre supper with a handful of shallots in the one pocket and of biscuit in the other, munching away at the contents of each in turn.

It is an old custom of the Navy for the Captain to give a dinner once a week with two officers from the "ward-room" and two from the "gun-room" as his guests. There was, however, no such social intercourse on board the *Vesuvius*. No dinners were ever given either by the Commodore or the ward-room, so our only changes of fare were on the few occasions when our steward was able to barter empty bottles, bars of soap, or leaves of tobacco for a few eggs and fowls, brought alongside by an enterprising nigger in a canoe from the distant shore.

Owing to the small number of subordinate officers on board we were in three watches, and I never got more than six hours' sleep at night, and more often than otherwise only four. There was no Chaplain or Naval Instructor on board, and had there been I doubt whether much time would have been allowed us for tuition. What with watch-keeping, drill and boat-duty, we were kept fully occupied.

It was the last dying phase of the lucrative Slave-Trade, hence it was a period of great activity with those engaged in the transport of slaves to Cuba and Brazil, while the squadron under the Commodore of the West Coast was there to cripple their efforts by active interference. Gone, however, were the

days when armed resistance was shown by the slavers, and many sharp and sanguinary engagements took place between the boats of the cruisers and their quarry when brought to bay ; and it had become more a battle of wits than of weapons in the struggle to effect captures.

—Prior to the Crimea the blockading force was principally composed of fast-sailing ten-gun brigs, but when I joined the *Vesuvius* there was only one left on the station, the ill-fated *Heron*, under Captain Truscott, which subsequently foundered in a tornado a few weeks after we had parted company with her. Speed was what the Yankee skipper relied upon, with vigilance and luck to assist in evading the British cruiser. Little heed was paid to comparatively limited space, as it was the custom to cram on board as many of the poor wretches possible, trusting to a quick passage across the Atlantic, which would allow a good percentage to reach the slave-market alive.

There were always two crews and Captains on board—American and Spanish. The Americans fitted out the vessel, and the American Captain retained command until the slaves were shipped. His contract was then over, and the Spanish Captain with his crew took charge. This change was due to the action of the United States Government, which had made the importation of slaves a penal offence. Uncle Sam would not allow of our exercising any right of search over American vessels, but had agreed to co-operate with us in the suppression of the Slave Traffic ; and at the time of which I am writing, maintained two ships-of-war on the West Coast of Africa, the one a small frigate and the other a “store-ship” stationed at St. Vincent.

The conveyance of slaves across the Atlantic Ocean had also been made piracy by a special Act of Congress, and all Yankees employed in the business had to face the chance of being caught

*en flagrant délit.* ° This was the weak point in a Yankee captain's defensive armour, upon which a strong-minded cruiser-captain could play. On the other hand, the latter had to face the possibility of a mistake; and if the vessel, though suspected, could prove herself an honest trader, there was not only the "dressing-down" which would come from my Lords Commissioners to be faced, but the indemnity the American Government would readily demand for the violation of its flag; and this, unless My Lords were merciful, he would be called upon to pay himself.

I can look back with pleasure to those days when, enjoying responsibility at an early age, one developed quickness of thought, hand and eye, and became a man whilst others of the same age were yet as children. I was midshipman of the foretop, and to this day I often wonder how it was that I never fell overboard or broke myself up by dropping upon a gun or one of the other many obstructions on deck. There was no preliminary order, as customary in the Service, "Young Gentlemen" and "Captains of the Top away aloft." We had to stand in the lower rigging at the head of the men when, at the word of command, "Away aloft!" they would rush, scrambling over me with no respect for my hands or head; and a very awkward and painful moment it was when, reaching the "futtock shrouds," I had to scramble over the edge of the "top," leaning backwards at an angle of forty degrees or so with a heavy seaman placing a foot upon my hand just as I had grasped the ratline above me, while the ship was rolling at the same time.

The threat of "flogging" the last man down from aloft was, however, only carried out once whilst I was on board, and then I was the indirect cause of breaking a fine young seaman's spirit and ruining his life in the Navy. We had been exercising "shifting topsails" pretty well all the forenoon, and the men, being

"fed up" a bit, had got a little slack. In any case, the time taken over the evolution did not please Charley Wise, and he had worked himself up into a rage and had uttered the threat to flog the last man down from aloft the next time.

Again came the order, and once more we rushed aloft. The fore-topsail had been shifted, and the men were rushing out of the tops, leaving rope-ends hanging. It was a dire offence to leave ropes hanging out, and, stopping the last man going down, I pulled him back to assist me in getting the ropes in order. At his plea, "Please, sir, I shall be the last man down," I let him go.

He still might not have been the last man had I not checked his progress for a few seconds, and it made my heart ache to think that I had called him back when, upon reaching the deck, I found the poor fellow tied up to the "gratings," the Marines under arms and the boatswain's mates in attendance with the "cat." The warrant for the punishment was being made out by the Secretary, and the old man was scowling away angrily, waiting to append his signature.

I stepped forward and said: "I beg your pardon, sir, but that man remained behind in the fore-top by my order, and I am responsible for his being the last man down. I was really the last one down from aloft." "Hold your tongue, sir," he angrily yelled, shaking his fist at me, "or I'll flog you!" "Do it, sir!" I furiously shouted, wild with rage.

I was shouldered away out of his sight by those standing near me, and the punishment commenced. The ink of his signature was not even dry when the first lash fell, followed in quick succession by others upon the writhing body, until nearly two dozen strokes had been given, and the poor fellow's back was a mass of raw flesh when he fainted, and the Surgeon insisted upon his being cast loose and taken to the "Sick Bay."

This, of course, was all very wrong, and quite at variance with the new regulations which had been issued some months before, greatly restricting the discretionary powers of the Captains of ships-of-war. No man was to be flogged for any offence without due examination and the hearing of what the offender might have to say in his defence. If punishment was to be inflicted, it was requisite that a "warrant" should be made out, and not put into execution until twenty-four hours had elapsed, thus affording time for reflection and preventing severe punishments being inflicted under the influence of passionate anger.

Strange to say, I received no punishment for my interference, at which I was rather surprised. The fact is that I had found favour with the old man owing to my skill in navigation and general smartness in the execution of orders, and I really believe he liked me somewhat for the manner in which I always stood up to him.

In those days the Captain of a man-o'-war still had the power of disrating midshipmen, and the only one we had in the mess—a curly-headed, jolly good-looking young fellow, whom we called "Molly," from his surname, Molyneux—was disrated so often to Naval Cadet and raised again to Midshipman rank that, in the end, he adopted the plan of wearing a flying patch—a small, square mark chalked up on his collar in place of the regulation bit of white cloth sewn upon it, to distinguish a midshipman. This went on up to within a short time before he completed the requisite period of service, passed the necessary examination and became an Acting Mate. He was not a favourite with the Comodore, and it was a very bitter pill for the old man to swallow when "Molly" rejoined the ship one day, with the pinnace in which he had been sent on a solitary cruise off a slave-shipping place, to report that he had assisted in the capture of a large slaver with a full cargo of slaves on board.

## CHAPTER II

## CHASING THE SLAVE-TRADERS

THE cleverness of the Yankee Captains often baffled us, and our Commodore, as a result of his indecision and cupidity, frequently suffered, but other officers fared better. As a type, I may narrate a capture as told to me by the very Yankee Captain who was seized when taking a vessel to her shipping post, but to whom we were giving a passage to St. Paul de Loanda, that he might get back to his own country.

It was one of many seizures made by the screw-gunboat *Viper* under Lieutenant Hewett, who subsequently rose to high position in the Navy as Admiral Sir Nathaniel Hewett. "Yes, sirr, I guess that Captain Hewett of yours is darned cute." It was thus he started his yarn, as we paced the deck together in the first dog-watch, and he proceeded to tell me the particulars of the fine large topsail-schooner he had brought across the Atlantic.

He was lying becalmed not far off the coast, waiting for the sea-breeze setting in as the sun rose higher, to run her into her shipping place, when the *Viper* hove in sight, coming up under a full head of steam. "She hove to when close at hand, and soon a boat came alongside and an officer stepped on board and very civilly asked several questions, in reply to which I pointed to my flag, and showed the ship's register certificate. 'That's all right,' he said. 'I'll tell my captain.'

“ Off he went, and then, just as I was thinking this man-o’-war would steam away, another boat shoved off from her and came alongside with a nice friendly-looking fellow steering. This was the Captain. He came up the side, smiled at me, and held out his hand. We shook, and I was just going to ask him if he wouldn’t liquor up when, looking aloft, he suddenly turns to me and sez : ‘ Why, Captain, you’ve got a very taut-rigged ship, & you spread a lot of canvas, and it seems to me you haven’t got too many men on board to handle those sails. I’ll tell you what I’ll do. . . . I have got a lot of lazy, fat-sterned fellows on board my ship. I’ll lend you a few whilst we are together. It will do them good.’ ”

“ ‘ But I guess I don’t want any of your men, and then I’m going another way,’ I said.

“ ‘ Oh, that’s all right ; my way is yours. You don’t know these waters, Captain ; you don’t know how dangerous it would be with your tall masts if you were to get caught in one of the southern squalls.’ ”

“ There was no getting out of it. He called out to his ship to send a boat’s crew on board, and in no time a dozen big Britishers were on board lounging about all parts of the decks, and scanning, with broad grins, the run of the ropes.

“ I held on as long as I could, hoping to tire out my dandy friend ; but our temporary passengers remained on board, and then, towards sunset, there was a great row forward. I knew what it meant. The Spanish crew, kept under hatches from the moment we sighted the darned steam-cruiser, had broken loose ; they couldn’t endure imprisonment any longer.

“ So I went to my cabin for her papers and threw them overboard and hauled down the flag, calling to the Britisher, ‘ Come on board ; she’s yours.’ ”

"Captain Hewett came on board looking darned pleased, and saying, 'Captain, what can I do for you?'

"'Oh, I'm no captain,' I sez; 'I'm a passenger for Loanda. Will you take me there?'

"So we had a bottle of champagne together, and he promised to put me on board the first cruiser going that way, and here I am."

On another occasion Hewett took a suspected slaver in tow.

'I haven't the slightest intention of violating Uncle Sam's flag,' he told the Captain, "and am not going to lift your hatches to see what you have got on board. What I mean to do is to give some of your Naval officers a chance of doing their duty. I shall hand you over to the United States' cruiser, which is not very far off. It won't delay your voyage very much if you are able to prove that you are not what I believe you to be, so let us get along to the rendezvous. . . . *Viper* ahoy!" he cried out. "Get that hawser passed along," and the end came off at once.

It was not long before the Yankee ship was bowling along astern of the *Viper* and, as the hours rolled by, her Captain weakened under the belief that they were really bound for a rendezvous, and that at any moment he might find himself under the guns of the States' cruiser. He had no stomach for a long imprisonment in "Sing-Sing," plus a heavy fine, so down came his flag and overboard went the weighted tin case with the ship's papers, and she became a lawful prize. The days of violent resistance were over, and the crew were always allowed to slip away. It saved complications, and the worse trouble of attending foreign courts of law. Hewett was credited with having made quite a nice little fortune before he left the station. It was the last dying flutter of the trade on the West Coast of Africa.



It was a very interesting life, this service in the Slave-Trade Blockading Squadron ; very varied, and in spite of the fact that for weeks together, I might say months, one never set foot on shore, it was not monotonous. During the time served under Charley Wise we visited more than once every part of the West Coast from the Gambia River to the Congo. Nothing was known to us at the time of the great river beyond twenty miles from where it flows into the Atlantic, and discolours the ocean for over a hundred miles from its mouth. And there were no trading stations on the Niger, but only those about the Delta. Whilst off the Slave Coast every sail we saw was chased, and on one occasion we sent a round shot of considerable size for those days—a 68-pounder—right into the quarter of one of our own British cargo and passenger-carrying steamships bound for Lagos.

There had been much talk along the coast of the prospect of the advent of steam slavers, and rumour had recently voiced a report that one of these craft was already hovering around the coast watching the opportunity to slip in somewhere for a cargo. We should probably have passed on but for certain suspicious movements on her part. She suddenly altered course, steaming away at right-angles in order to get away as quickly as possible, as it seemed to us. It was soon seen that she had the legs of us, and after one or two rounds of blank cartridge had been fired at her as a summons to stop, without producing any effect, the old Commodore decided upon stronger measures being taken to bring her to. She stopped fast enough when the unexpected messenger arrived and struck her with a crash. She proved to be the ss. *Britannia*. Her Captain, relying on his superior speed had thought to have a bit of a lark with the Navy men. He got, a good wiggling from the Commodore, and the matter being reported to the Admiralty, he was dismissed from his command.

Only once did anything disagreeable occur to me when boarding a vessel. I had been sent to examine the papers of a barque which was found at anchor near a slave port. She had the appearance of a whaler from the number of double-ended boats hanging from the davits along her side. Certain other fittings of the genuine whaler, however, seemed to be missing. As we pulled towards her, a man was seen to be mounting to each mast-head, and very shortly after ironical calls of "There she spouts!" reached our ears.

It was evident that they were purely bent upon amusing themselves at our expense, as no preparations were made to lower boats and start in pursuit of their imaginary big game. Moreover, on getting alongside, we found the "gangway cleats" had been well flushed with grease, as well as the man-ropes ostentatiously thrown over for our assistance in mounting. There was no great distance to go, but not until most of the grease had been transferred to our clothes did any of us in the boat succeed in reaching her decks. Every time a footing was gained, only to be lost again in the inevitable slip, the failure was greeted with jeering cries and loud guffaws of laughter. In the end I succeeded in getting on board with some of my men, but only to find that she was really engaged in whaling.

An echo of this slave traffic reached me years afterwards, when, as an officer of the Sultan of Turkey, I paid a visit to the slave barracoons at Hodeidah in the Red Sea. I was then in command of the cadets on board a training-frigate on its way back from the Persian Gulf, and the old Turkish Commodore in charge of the voyage had wanted to pick up a stout negro wench or two for service in his house and kitchen. So, with a guide from the post-office, we went to the slave-mart.

Hodeidah, at the time of which I am writing—July, 1876—was the principal depot in the Red Sea, but the “barracoons,” where they were lodged, were all well out of sight from seaward, hidden behind tall sand-dunes, and little or nothing was known about them and the traffic that went on, except by those actively interested in it. Steamers called regularly at Hodeidah, and many slaves were openly “carted off” by them, especially females, as passengers forming part of the harems of wealthy Moslems, who paid high prices for reserved portions of the poop and upper deck, upon which they camped, screened off from view as much as possible.

The slave-mart was a square enclosure in which, penned in on one side, stood a number of young women. Ushered in with low salaams by the head-dealer, we took our seats on the divan provided for our accommodation as prospective purchasers of high degree. We sipped our coffee and smoked cigarettes—the necessary preliminaries to a deal—and then commenced the parade of the dealer’s wares. One after another the women wanted were brought up for our inspection, all dressed alike in a loose sleeveless tunic of red cotton stuff reaching just below the knee, but with nothing else on save brass and copper anklets and bracelets, and sometimes a necklace of the same material as well. As they went before us, the assistant standing by the woman’s side would draw attention to her attractive points, making her open her mouth that we might see her sound, firm white teeth, and drawing aside the tunic in the case of the younger ones to show off their shapely limbs, and prove to us the non-existence of any blemishes. There were some really pretty creatures in their way, with nothing whatever about them of the negro, except their large black eyes and the little crisp, short curls of dark hair which covered their heads. Their features were as delicately

moulded as many Europeans', but their colouring was a reddish bronze, showing their exotic origin.

They passed by without a deal, much to the surprise and disgust, I fear, of the head-merchant, who had looked at me several times with an expectant glance, as one more comely than her predecessor was brought up for inspection. They were all from the Abyssinian Coast (Abeshees, as the dealer called them). The old Commodore wanted none of that brand. Born in the warm climate not far from the Equator, they were too delicate for hard work in a cold one like that of Turkey, as he explained to the dealer ; and as for me, " my harem was already sufficiently well-stocked," I informed him, for me to think of making any additions. But hadn't he got in stock any stout-limbed, strong Somali girls, anxiously enquired the old Commodore, Ismail Bey. " That is what I want."

Then out of the bitterness of the man's soul came a torrent of execrations against these accursed " Ghiaour Ingleez," who, with their sheitanic vapours, had been so hampering the movements of the dhows for months past, that no cargoes could get across the " Bab-el-Mandeb," and he had not a single woman in stock but these Abeshees. Turning to me for sympathy, he continued to pour out the vials of his wrath, until with a last cup of coffee and cigarette we " Allaha marladicked " (committed him to Allah), and left.

I sent an account of this visit to the Foreign Office, explaining how the illicit Slave Trade was fostered in Egypt, and the harems of wealthy Mohammedans filled, by the connivance of the shipping agencies in the Red Sea.

During my service on board the *Vesuvius* we visited every part of the West Coast stations. We looked in at Goree, which belongs to the French. It was one of the first foreign trading

stations to be established on the coast. I was not allowed to land, being mast-headed, but passed the greater part of the day we spent there up on the "fore crosstrees," from which I had a splendid view and made a sketch of the town and its antiquated defences, which received commendation from the old Commodore when he saw it. For a few miles south of Sierra Leone, and then for several hundred miles, the African coast presents to the eye from seaward, nothing but a long low line of shore, densely clothed with tropical verdure. Where there are streams and rivers, their channels run for miles among wide-spreading groves of mangrove bushes, with their roots bedded in the rich mud below the water, in some cases as deep as ten or twelve feet. Their branches sway with the wind and, dipping into the water, give rise to the curious fact that oysters in certain places are to be found growing upon trees. It is due, of course, to the oyster-spawn attaching itself to the first obstacle encountered in floating about after detachment from the mothers of the species.

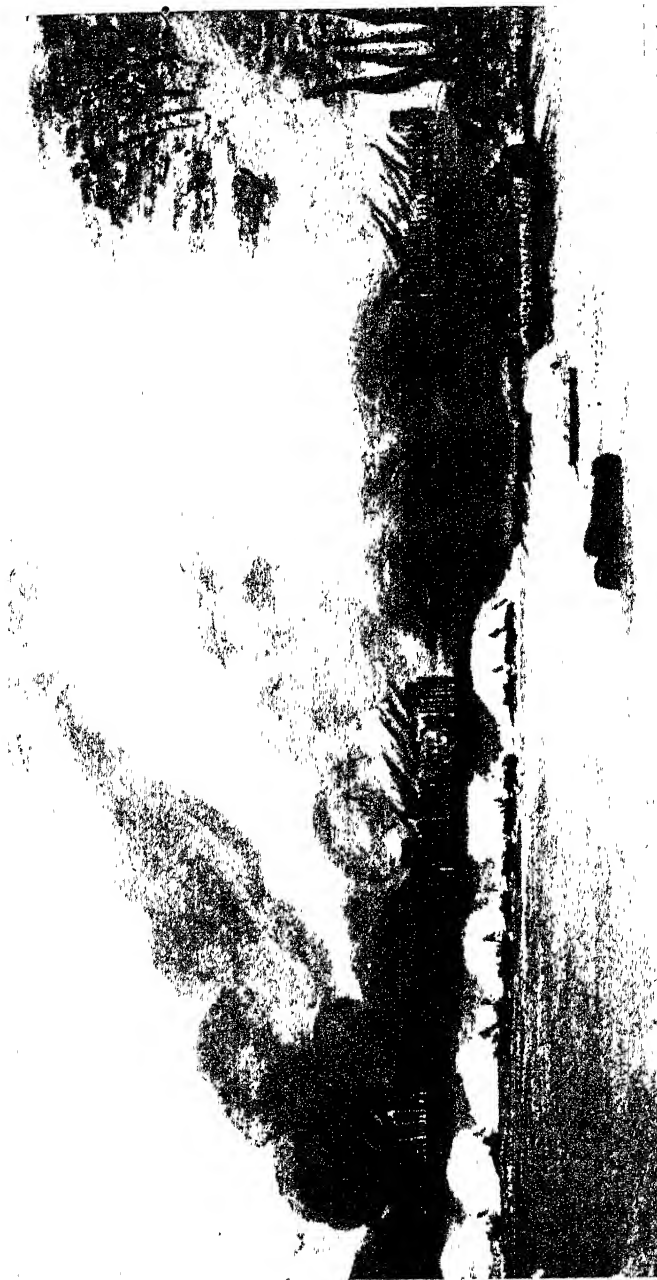
All landing upon any part of the coast of Guinea was always difficult, and at times very dangerous, and even at Lagos no boat's crew of white men was ever allowed to attempt the passage of the bar, only Kroo-boys being employed for that purpose. They were woolly-headed negroes, living on that part of the coast, born boatmen, sailors and fishers. They worked in gangs under headmen, and every cruiser immediately arriving on the coast added a number of them to her complement of seamen to do the work of "hewers and drawers." All boat surf-work was done by them, as well as any toil that entailed much exposure to the tropical sun, such as coaling. They were like fish in the water, and feared no sharks.

As they formed part of the ship's company and it was requisite that their names should appear upon the books, they were,

to avoid difficulties in pronouncing their native appellations, given others. Who was the facetious person that first started the idea of extracting fun from it, I don't know, but some of them bore the most extraordinary names. In mustering the watch, when it came to their section I found myself calling out, "Flying Jib!"—"Yes, sir." "Jack Short of Water!"—"Yes, sir." "Bottle of Beer!" etc., etc. Not once did I have to call out a high-sounding English name, or that of an ancient or modern hero, famous statesman or warrior, such as the woolly-pated men of the West Indies and Southern States of America used to indulge in. It was always the same: a ludicrous sobriquet, and the invariable answer, "Yes, sir," followed in acknowledgment, in accents of proud possession.

Accidents in crossing the bar were rare, but such a one did occur a few months after we had left—a terribly tragic affair in which two Naval officers were lost, and all the boat's crew except the Coxswain, who survived all the buffeting of the surf and lived to tell the tale. They belonged to the small paddle-steamer, the *Bruri*, tender to the *Vesuvius*, and usually stationed inside the bar. On the fatal day the victims were carrying out soundings, and when their boat capsized in the surf, any rescue was impossible.

The place is too infested with sharks, both inside the bar and outside. I never saw in any other part of the world so large a number of those voracious fish and such a variety as I saw swimming round the old *Vesuvius* when lying at anchor off Lagos. In the clear water we could see them turning their bodies round to bring their snouts into position for the ugly mouth lying beneath, to snap its vicious jaws and swallow anything thrown overboard within its ken. There was the tiger shark, with its large round spots and stripes; the hammer-headed one, with its



*Sketches by the Author*

ATTACK ON THE STOCKADED STRONGHOLD OF THE SACSUS, NEAR THE RAPIDS OF THE SKARJES RIVER  
*p. 30*





eyes sticking out on either side of its head in large, fleshy, protuberant sockets, giving it the appearance of a blacksmith's sledge, and hence its name ; and the common shark of the dog-fish shape.

We heard the sad news of the loss of the two officers on our return to Sierra Leone after a war-like expedition under Colonel S. J. Hill, the Governor of Sierra Leone, up the Skarcies River, which formed the boundary at that time between the " Timmanehs," a tribe under our protection, and the " Susus," a branch of the Mandingos, and a fighting people, raiders and slave-dealers (March, 1859).

This tragic event at Lagos placed a death vacancy for the rank of Lieutenant in the hands of the Commadore, and he took once more the opportunity to show his spiteful feeling against poor Molyneux by summoning him to his presence to inform him that although he could promote him, he would not do so. It did Molly no harm, however, and he subsequently received his promotion for services in this expedition.

On the Susus expedition I was again a witness of old-fashioned Naval discipline. There was much boat-work up the river, and as I was in charge of one of the craft I had been furnished by the boatmen with a topgallant "stun-sail" to haul over the sun awning, and house the boat in at night to keep off the deadly dew ; and our Assistant "Saw-bones" had given me a couple of large bottles of what the bluejackets call "Queen Anne." It was quinine wine, of which I was ordered to see that each one of my crew drank a wineglass full every morning, as well as myself. Heaven knows there was no persuasion required to get them to take it ! That first night, whilst I was asleep in the stern-sheets, the men got hold of the bottles and drank off the whole lot. Oh, what a sight their heads were in the morning ! . . . their

eyes drawn, their cheeks haggard, and their hair hanging lank over their aching brows, they looked so unhappy that I made up my mind to keep the matter dark, and to appear not to know anything about it.

I kept to this resolution, the more so that I knew well I should catch it from the old man if I reported it, as he would have declared it to have been my fault that the men had got hold of the liquor. It was well for the poor fellows that I did, as most assuredly they would have been flogged.

One man of another boat's crew actually did receive two dozen lashes whilst we were up the river on that expedition. I never heard of such a thing having been done before, not for want of men in authority of the type of Charlie Wise, but probably on account of the difficulty of carrying out such a punishment in a boat having prevented anyone from trying to attempt it.

My shipmate Brown, who had come out in the *Archer* with me and had also been annexed by the Commodore, had been placed in charge of the ambulance-boat which carried the Assistant-Surgeon and his gear, and one of his men, while we were lying at anchor waiting for the ebb-tide to change, had taken the opportunity to have a bath. Bathing had been strictly prohibited, and when the offence reached the ears of the Commodore, not from any report of the luckless youngster in charge, a warrant was promptly made out. The required "grating" was rigged in one of our large paddle-box boats, and the Boatswain's Mate carried out the sentence with the cruel cat. My friend Brown was placed under arrest, and tried by a Court of Enquiry on our return to the ship.

He was a very curious character in his way. He had a very wonderful memory for certain things, and could tell you the

tonnage and armament of pretty well every ship in the Navy, as well as the name of her Captain. But he apparently had not much use for that faculty in respect to matters of daily life on board, and lived to a great extent in the clouds.

I could do a considerable amount of "castle-building" myself, and my life on board the *Vesuvius* would have been much more wretched than it was but for my ability to carry myself far away in my thoughts at will from my immediate surroundings. This faculty, however, I never possessed to the same extent as Brown. I never got so absorbed in my thoughts as he did, and was always ready to come back when wanted. As for him, I have seen him walk up and down the quarter-deck in his watch, grinning and chuckling to himself as he looked up aloft, at nothing that he could possibly see up there to excite such action.

The fact is that he was oblivious of everything outside his mental vision at the moment, and I have seen him walk close past the Commodore, chuckling, without being in the slightest degree aware of his presence, until a roaring, "Mr. Brown, what the d—l are you doing?" brought him back from his pleasant dreams to the sad realities of life. Then came the harsh words of a savage slanging, ending with a more or less long spell at the "masthead."

As the result of the "Enquiry" into the charge against him he lost a few months of his time, and was dismissed into another craft. We parted, and I never saw him again. It was a lucky chance for him, as the ship to which he was appointed captured several slavers.

Still, precautions in the expedition were necessary, and especially had we to watch for trade rum, since the bluejacket will always find something to drink, if left long enough to himself.

I soon heard, one night, that a "grey-beard" had made its appearance among the men, and its contents were being rapidly consumed, a "grey-beard," it may be mentioned, being the name given to these bottles on account of their colouring.

On this occasion we used Congreve rockets which, screwing their way through all obstacles, burst over the hostile natives' houses, scattering fiery bands in all directions, and the flames and smoke from the burning palm-leaf thatch rose high, lighting up and darkening the sky as well.

A fine sight it was to watch these war rockets in flight, but a most terrifying one for the enemy. The most efficacious of all artillery for dealing with savage foes in difficult country, it is somewhat surprising to find that they have passed out of use in warfare in the present day. There is one drawback to them—the uncertainty of their action, which entails a certain amount of risk to the firing-party. The roaring sound of the escaping gas, which speeds the rocket on its way as the composition behind the shell is ignited, is very awe-inspiring, and to our ignorant barbarian enemies they must have appeared as messengers from the "evil powers" they feared. Sometimes, however, they hang in the tube, and then it is a case of let go the "holding-line" that the tube may fall into the water whilst all hands in the boat jump overboard and remain in the water until the final spluttering and explosion is over. More than once have I known this to occur when exercising at firing practice, and I had to do it myself on one occasion. Their course, too, is not always direct. They will sometimes turn round after going a certain distance, and come back again.

At this attack I saw one of these great roaring rockets pass clean through the trunk of a large cotton-tree and, swerving widely to the left, enter and pass under a mud-bank for some

distance, to rise out of it again, and pursue its flight for some yards further before exploding.

In spite of the regular dosing with quinine wine, fever broke out, and nearly all who took part in the expedition caught it. I was one of the fortunate few who escaped, notwithstanding that I had not taken a single drop of the mixture. The whole of my boat's crew also did the same. I escaped because, as I often think, I must have been fever-proof in those days, and my men, on account of the complete saturation they got of quinine, left no room for the fever virus to get into their blood. In some other boats, from the bowmen to the officers in the stern-sheets, they all went down with the malady.

The *Trident*, a paddle-wheel steamer which helped in the operations, having to remain at Sierra Leone until released by another vessel, her crew had not the same chance of getting rid of the fever as our men, and an epidemic of "yellow Jack" broke out amongst them. The *Trident's* Captain at once put to sea, starting for Ascension, but before reaching that island, as we afterwards learnt, nearly half her officers and crew died of that fell disease.

The result of the Naval and Military dispatches sent by the Governor and Commodore was a certain amount of rewards. The Commodore's did not contain any recommendation, but that of the Governor contained one in favour of Molly for his good services. He was promoted to Lieutenant, and left us by the next mail-steamer to return home, and I never came across him again until many years afterwards. We were then, on that occasion, fellow-guests at a Trinity House dinner given in the honour of King Edward, then Prince of Wales. Molyneux at that time was an admiral and a K.C.B., and I was one in the Imperial Ottoman Service and a Pasha.

From Sierra Leone to the Congo we skirted the land, and on reaching the head of the Great Bight formed by the abrupt change in the direction of the coast, which turns almost dead south, I surveyed a small cove near the foot of the Cameroon Mountains. This was Morto Bay, which subsequently gave rise to much acrimonious dispute between our Foreign Office and the German Government under Bismarck, which annexed it and the surrounding territory under the title of the Cameroons. I had a good reason to remember this place, as I was capsized in the surf the day my surveying work was completed.

## CHAPTER III

## A LONG VOYAGE HOME

A LAST visit to the Congo towards the end of 1859, and then we started upon our homeward voyage. Punta da Lena was about the furthest point to which our ships or boats had pushed in their search for slavers, and that was not much more than twenty-five miles or so from its mouth.

My principal recollection connected with the Congo is in respect to the visit of native potentates to the *Vesuvius* to hold what in coast parlance was called *corroborees* (talkee talkees), with the big White Chief of the "Fire Ships." They came off in great canoes manned by many rowers, with their Medicine men and counsellors, and seated themselves on the quarter-deck with a dignity that contrasted strangely with their ludicrous appearance in what I supposed must be considered their State Costumes.

Apart from the Head Chiefs—the Kings, as they loved to be styled, in imitation of the rulers of the mighty "Inglees"—and the Medicine-men, the others were garbed in various articles, which looked for all the world as if they had been picked out at random from the contents of an "old clo' shop"—officers' swallow-tails, marines' ditto, monkey-jackets and other garments, all of which had seen better days and were pretty old. With the exception of the coats, these articles of dress were not always worn over the parts of the body for which they were

originally intended, as, for instance, when a waistcoat was made to serve as a loin-cloth and a pair of trousers hung over the back of the neck, with the legs left dangling in front, and the seat behind as a covering for the back. Apparently it was not considered etiquette to cover the legs, except so far as the swell silk mantles of Arab fashion worn by the Kings did so.

Not one of our visitors, with the exception of the Medicine-men, was ever seen completely dressed in either native or European fashion, as the man who could sport a shirt had nothing else over it, or the man with a coat anything else under it. Not even the Head Chiefs, who wore leather sandals whilst the others all displayed their sprawling flat feet, formed an exception, as on their heads was proudly displayed either an old top hat or a head-covering made out of a bit of old woollen comforter with the end tucked in, leaving the tassel as a top-knot.

They were a comical-looking lot, and it was difficult to preserve one's countenance in their presence. As for the Medicine-men, their raiment, apart from the loin-cloth *de rigueur*, consisted apparently of nothing but paint, ostrich feathers and necklaces of sharks' teeth, monkey ditto, and cowries. They all had a fine taste for ships' rum, and enjoyed many glasses of it before they left.

From the Congo we proceeded to St. Paul de Loanda, for the, Commodore to have a last interview with the slave-trade Commissioner, who there had his Headquarters. Thence we proceeded under sail to St. Helena. We were just nine days making the run, averaging about six knots an hour before the south east trade-wind blowing steadily all the time.

We only spent five days at anchor off Jamestown, and all that I saw of St. Helena on that occasion was from the mast-head. In those days it was a place of great importance, as a



port of call ; and the ships' chandlers and agents did a roaring trade in furnishing vessels with water and fresh provisions. There was no Suez Canal in those days ; the possible creation of such a short cut to the Far East had not even been thought of. All vessels bound round the Cape of Good Hope had to sight St. Helena and make a short stay to regulate their chronometers, and pick up provisions.

The island is surrounded by tall cliffs, and the only access to the interior is at one place on its lee-side, where, as if by some giant hand, the wall of cliff had been cloven open with an axe, broadening rapidly from its cutting edge. There is a gulley leading up to the table-land from which rises Diana's Peak, and the houses of Jamestown are built along its flanks and bottom. A fort crowns the cliff to the right of the town, from which a very long flight of steps runs down to it, known as the Ladder.

An interesting sight it was to see the sailing-ships arriving, the Indiamen and the China clippers. Opposite the fort, on the other side of Jamestown, is Reef-Topsail Point, so-called because it was necessary to reduce sail as much as possible before reaching it, as the trade-wind blowing over the island always comes down through a narrow gap in terrific squalls. As a vessel came off the Point, however much she may have shortened sail, over she heeled till her scuppers nearly reached the water ; then up she would come again, like a lady rising from a curtsy.

It is *Ichabod* with St. Helena now. But it has to be still held if we are to preserve our rights at sea.

Not until some six years after, did I see St. Helena again—on my way back from Japan, when I spent three very pleasant days there.

We had a fine run under sail from St. Helena to Ascension, that lonely island of the Atlantic, and there it was we spent long,

weary weeks waiting for the arrival of Commodore Edmondstone in the frigate *Arrogant* coming to relieve our "old man."

Fortunately for a time we had some diversion. If life on board a West Coast cruiser was full of movement, though it offered no opportunities for social amusements, yet we found, however, great pleasure at times in our fishing excursions when we were away from the slaving sections of the coast, and could land without danger from any treacherous interference on the part of savage natives. Our seining-parties were particularly jolly, and there is one such seining that I shall never forget. It was at the Isles de Los, a picturesque little group of islets some eighty miles to the northward of Sierra Leone. The setting was a little cove with a white sandy beach, silvered by the moonlight. The cove was formed by a rocky promontory jutting for a considerable distance seaward, and so serving as a breakwater. It was crowned by a group of tall coco-nut palms, below which and circling round the cove was a dark, dense belt of tropical foliage. With the moonlight streaming down upon the water from over the tall leafy palm-trees, and the wavelets raised by the light airs coming off the land glistening in its rays, it was a lovely picture; in verity a sweet and peaceful scene of fairy-land beauty, until the noisy laughter and shouting of the men, as they set to work, disturbed the stillness of the night.

Still, if the reef-fishing was not so amusing as were the seining-parties, it provided more sport in a way, and certainly more excitement. Most of it took place when we were off the Island of Ascension, which like St. Helena, similarly situated nearly a thousand miles to the south-eastward, rises abruptly from the bottom of the deep ocean, thrown up to place its lofty peak in the clouds by some great volcanic convulsion. Unlike St. Helena, however, which has plenty of verdure, Ascension presents

nothing to the eye but an agglomeration of black, brown, red and white colouring, that of the lava-beds, and craters of the extinct volcanoes, of which the island is formed, and the beaches which fringe its shores.

It is the home of the sea-birds, for a thousand miles or more all round ; there is no other land anywhere for a resting-place. It is here they meet, mate, and bring up their offspring, each species possessing by immemorial right, its own special part of the island. No shipwrecked mariner or cast-away would ever starve on Ascension, even if there were no naval establishment to supply food, as the sea-birds are to be found there in plenty all the year round.

There, too, the sandy beaches provide nesting-places for the turtles which find a home at Ascension—the finest turtles in the world, both as regards size and flavour. They are all held to be the property of the Government. They are caught by the men of the dockyard establishment, as they are straddling back to the water after having deposited their eggs in the sand well above water-mark for the beneficent rays of the sun to hatch them. They are overcome by a frontal attack, their fore flippers are seized, and by a dexterous twist of the wrist, they are turned over on their backs. They are then helpless, and are dragged away to the pens constructed in shallow water to keep them from getting away.

The fishing !—the outlying reefs of Ascension teem with many varieties of fish, some of them most excellent eating. But there were two kinds that gave us much worry and annoyance. The one is a species of conger, a spotted, reptile-looking sea-water eel, provided with a large mouth full of long, thin, sharp-pointed, needle-like teeth ; it barked like a dog and snapped away viciously at everything. There was no handling one of these things.

All had to get out of its way once one of them was caught and hauled on board, leaving the luckless fisherman to deal with it as best he could, by killing it, or lifting it back into its native element, and cutting the line. •

The other kind were the sharks. They were a nuisance, as they sprang at the fish whilst they were being hauled up, when they did not take the bait and get hooked themselves. They also frightened the other fish away, and it was always necessary to shift ground when two or three had been caught in succession. They were all young fish, not more than three or four feet long, but nasty things to handle.

Both sea-birds' eggs and turtle formed a welcome change in our diet, and for the several months we stayed at anchor there, towards the end of our commission, waiting for our relief, we practically lived upon them. There is a bird called the "wide-awake" I have never seen anywhere but at Ascension. It is about the size of a gull, and the place where it lays its eggs was called Wideawake Fair. It was so called, I expect, on account of the very lively and fighting attitude of the occupants. To ensure getting fresh eggs, as we had no scientific appliance or knowledge of any sort which would help us to ascertain their age, it was our practice to go out and destroy all those we found within a certain radius from a peg-point, and then to return the following day, and gather up those we found within the marked boundaries. The mother-birds fought hard to preserve the embryo offspring, flying viciously in our faces with intent to peck out our eyes, and uttering the shrillest cries of anger. They rose up in clouds against us, and the din was so great that one could not hear what anyone else, although close at hand, was saying, and it was only by the constant twirling of a stout stick over one's head, that they could be kept away.

Ascension in those days was maintained on the same footing as a ship-of war. In fact, theoretically it formed part of the *Tortoise*, the old hulk kept strongly moored off the landing-jetty, and all persons living on the island were borne on her books, and the Captain of the vessel was the governor of the island. It was the Sanatorium for the West Coast squadron, and on a small plateau near the peak was a hospital for the sick. This, the highest part of the island, was called the Green Mountain, and was the only spot where there was any vegetation. A few sheep and cows were kept there, but solely for the use of the sick, and the few wives and families of the officers allowed to reside on the island.

One of the most curious of the phenomena connected with the oceans, and especially at Ascension, are the "rollers"—the great high waves which suddenly set in without any apparent reason. The sea might be very calm on the surface, with no wind blowing at the time, when suddenly would be seen a huge wave rolling in from seaward, to be followed in quick succession by many others, cutting off those on shipboard from all personal communication with the shore. This will sometimes continue for two or three days, and then will cease as suddenly as it commenced. It is the same at St. Helena, but in a minor degree.

Ascension, although so barren, and without any vegetation except in the one place I have mentioned, is a fertile island in the making, as it were, and ages hence, how many thousands of years no one can tell, it will have its cultivation like St. Helena. As the volcanic ashes and lava disintegrate under the strong action of the tropical sun's rays, more and more soil will be created, and the process can already be seen in progress. But it is still a very weary place, and existence there was such a very dull affair that the poor ladies who accompanied their husbands

appointed to positions on the island soon found that the best relief to the monotony was to start quarrelling with each other, and doing their best to set their husbands by the ears against each other.

One good story was told me at the time of a regular Solomon's judgment recently delivered by the Captain in command of the island, H.M.S. *Ascension*, in a dispute between two of the ladies upon a question of precedence. There was a garrison of Marines as well as bluejackets, and naturally there was a senior officer of each corps. Their two wives each laid claim to a special pew in the little church, and after much acrimonious dispute, in which each one asserted her right, an appeal was made to the Governor. There being no lady connected with him on the island to influence his mind, he accorded a patient hearing to each of the claimants, and he gave as his decision, that the pew should be occupied by the elder lady of the two. Result, the pew was never occupied by either.

My last view of *Ascension*, which I left with no regret, was taken from the mizen cross-trees, whither I had been sent as punishment for having remained too long ashore. I had been dispatched at the last moment with our mail-bag to await the arrival of a vessel to carry it on to England, and had met in the canteen one of the fellows of the *Tortoise*, the Assistant-Paymaster. We were having a last drink and a yarn together, and I had allowed the time to slip by, forgetting that they were impatiently waiting on board for the return of the gig to be hoisted up before getting under way. I "got it hot," for the cable had been hove short for quite a quarter of an hour before the signalman, watching with his eye glued to the long telescope, could announce that the gig had shoved off. The recall pennants, that had been flying all the time, came down, and I went up instead to the masthead.

We made the voyage home under sail, crossing the line well to the westward and passed through the Azores without anchoring, and picking up the brave west winds, soon after losing the north-east trade wind, found ourselves off the entrance of the Channel in a strong gale.

We were hove to for some nine hours, and then getting up steam and furling the sails that had served us so well, we steamed into Plymouth Sound on February 6th, 1860, just forty-one days from Ascension.

This sailing voyage in an old paddle-wheel steamer from the coast of Africa was a notable feat. We came home from Ascension with few executive officers—only the Master and two Master's Assistants and a gunner acting as a watch-officer. There was also an acting boatswain, who during part of the voyage was placed under close arrest, sitting in his cabin with his feet outside his door in irons. I doubt whether such a sight had ever been seen since the days when a Captain placed a midshipman in a "hen-coop" as a punishment for alleged dirty habits, and used to visit him each morning until released, with hand outstretched as if offering food to a pet chicken, with a friendly greeting of "Coopity-coop-coop!"

The sequel of this old yarn is that on paying off the ship in England, the midshipman had the law of his Captain, and when the verdict was announced, awarding £1,000 in damages, the midshipman turned to his Ex-Captain, saying, as he made the pretence of picking up sovereigns, "Coopity-coop-coop!"

The boatswain who had been placed under arrest for impertinence and neglected duty, was released before we reached Plymouth and sent back to work. No court martial was held, and it was well for all on board that it ended so, as otherwise there would have been a great scandal.

## CHAPTER IV

## OLD-TIME LIFE IN THE NAVY

THUS ended my connection with the West Coast of Africa, which I am not sorry to say I never saw again. My service under Commodore Charles Wise was a bitter experience, since it was a very hard and trying life for a youngster ; but I have never regretted it, and before many more years had passed over my head I had come to think that my appointment to the *Vesuvius* was the best possible thing that could have happened to me, and that I really owed a debt of gratitude to the stern old man for the way he brought me up. He had a sneaking regard for me, and when the ship paid off I was the only officer who received a certificate stating after the words, "has served with sobriety," the additional voucher for "good conduct" and "entirely to my satisfaction."

With a meagrely-lined purse, I was able to keep my head above water without having to trouble my people for any extra money, as there were no places where money could be spent. Then I was doing a man's work whilst I was still a youth, keeping officer's watch occasionally and sometimes acting as "sole navigator." To have responsibility thrust upon one early in life develops the mind and creates self-confidence. But what a contrast life in the Navy was in the old far-off days to what it is in the present time ! The work hard, never a full night's rest, and the fare rough. Ships' provisions principally, and nothing



to drink but tea, cocoa, and lime-juice, all sweetened with coarse brown sugar, for the gun-room officers were allowed no wines or spirits, and beer was not procurable in those days along the slave-trade coast. It is true there was the half-gill tot of good old Jamaica rum, to which everyone on board was entitled daily from the Commodore down to the second-class boys.

The thirsty Oldsters in the mess, however, always drank my share and Brown's between them. I have ever felt thankful for this, as it prevented my acquiring a taste for spirits in my young days and forming a habit that has in many cases shipwrecked a career which was sometimes most promising.

The old Commodore was of the rough old school; he had not reached the quarter-deck by way of the "hawse-pipes," as the saying was, though he might have done so by the vigorous quality of his sailor language. I can hear him now haranguing us when a petition from the gun-room had reached him, asking us to be allowed to have a little live-stock on board in the way of fowls, etc., and a little stock of beer and wine. "When I went to sea, all I had was a tin-pot and a spoon, and right glad I was with any grub I could get hold of. You, young fellows, want table-cloths and napkins and well-spread tables with plenty of luxurious food. No, you can't have it, neither one nor the other."

Well, the gun-room did him once. The Master's Mate had brought from the shore a bottle of white rum, and he and the other Oldsters were discussing it in the afternoon, about the hour of tea. The bottle was in the steward's pantry, so that it should not meet the eye of any casual visitor in the shape of a Boatswain's Mate or Quartermaster, bringing a summons to anyone of us to appear on deck; and the steward was dispensing the liquor mixed with water to the required strength in tea-cups.

Meanwhile the old man had come on deck for a quarter-deck walk, and passing and re-passing the big hatchway that led down to the main deck, his ears were so frequently assailed with the call, "Steward, another cup of tea!" once or twice in rather louder tones than the occasion seemed to require, that his suspicions were aroused. "Quartermaster, pass the word for the Master at Arms," we heard him say in acid tones.

In a minute or two down came that ship's police official, followed by his assistant, the ship's Corporal. "Gentlemen," he said, "the Commodore wants you all on deck." Up we went, and were ordered to toe the line in front of him. "What are you drinking in the gun-room?" he asked. "Tea, sir," promptly answered Molly, the acting Mate.

At that moment up came the police executives, holding tea-cups in their hands and sniffing at them. "We couldn't find any liquor, sir, but these cups smell pretty strong of it," said the Master-at-Arms, holding his cup under the nose of the old man. "Where have you hidden that liquor?" No one knew anything about liquor. I declared that I had not drunk any liquor, and did not know where any was, and the other men more vehemently declared their ignorance. He stamped the deck and raved at us, shaking his fist in our faces, and swearing that he would find out where that liquor we had been drinking had come from, even if he had to remain on deck all night questioning us.

A further search of the gun-room, in which all lockers, shelves, and the large box under the table were carefully examined, revealed nothing, and getting tired at last of look in at our impassive faces, with a last threatening gesture he went below, and taking this as our tacit dismissal, we also left for our quarters. Later on the bottle made its appearance again, and its remaining

contents were promptly disposed of ; this time, however, in the quietest manner possible.

Whilst we were still on the ship, no one but ourselves ever knew where that bottle had gone to. At each end of that wooden box under the big gun-room table, used for keeping stores and technically called "the donkey," was a very large earthenware crock. They were always kept full of fresh water, to eke out our supply when placed upon a daily ration, as we often were, and one of our fellows, at the first intimation of danger—the call for the "Master-at-Arms"—had promptly lifted the cover of the nearest crock and popped the bottle, well-corked, into it, where it sank to the bottom.

One great source of discomfort we had on board was the swarms of cockroaches. We had really what might be considered two successive plagues of them. The first I became acquainted with belonged to a small variety. They were succeeded by a breed of long brown, evil-smelling things which apparently had swallowed up all their predecessors. They were so big on the wing that they afforded us much amusement in mimic sport. We shot them with miniature bows and arrows and raced them as "Derby winners."

In order to arrange for a *battue* we all sat quietly round the table, upon which was strewn minute biscuit-crumbs and sugar-dust. The lamp would be turned down, and presently the cockroaches would begin to assemble. After a few minutes the lamp was turned up again. The quarry, dazzled by the sudden light and the strange noises we made to frighten them, would rise up to fly away to their hiding-places. Off flew our small arrows, and two or three would fall to lucky shots. Then after intervals the manœuvre would be repeated again and again until they ceased to come for that night.

The Derby racing was done by placing them in line, each with on its back a little piece of what was called a "Purser's dip," the small thin candle used in lanterns when working in the holds in those days. At the word "Go!" given by the starter, the wicks would be lighted and a slight push given to the cockroach by its backer in the direction of the winning-post. As the warmth from the candle reached their backs away they would scamper, the backers standing by with little sticks to turn them round again to the right direction if they moved aside from it. The first cockroach to pass the mark was, of course, proclaimed the winner.

But these large insects appeared in such great numbers at last, and were so voracious that they became a veritable pest, penetrating everywhere in search of food. They were actually found nibbling at the toes of anyone exposing a foot in his sleep. So war to the death was declared upon all cockroaches, and an edict issued by the Commodore declared that every ship's boy on board should, at the morning muster, fall in with two dozen live cockroaches each, under the penalty of receiving strokes with the cane for every one short of that number.

At first it was an easy matter for them all to present the full toll, and every morning at "Seven Bells" (half-past seven), these boys, with arms and legs bared for the inspection of the Master-at-Arms to enable him to report that they were all clean and properly dressed, stood in line on the quarter-deck, each holding in his right hand a tough and strong grass stem, upon which were impaled a number of wriggling cockroaches. There was laughing and joking going on between them until "Attention!" was called, and the Master-at-Arms stepped forward and commenced gravely counting the noxious things.

As time went on, however, the cockroaches became less numerous and more elusive, and the boys had to go farther afield

for their "game." We were glad to let them come and rummage in our lockers, although it rather interfered with our own sport. They never thought of producing at the muster more than the number required to escape punishment, and if they made a good catch, as was sometimes the case, the extra ones were carefully stowed away in an empty jam-pot or wide-mouthed pickle-bottle, and kept for the rainy day when the find might be meagre.

Disaster, however, cannot always be evaded, and I recollect one day of dire misfortune when there was much wailing and gnashing of teeth, as they danced about to the tune of the Master-at-Arm's cane as it whisked about their naked limbs.

There was a large chest in the steerage, belonging to the Secretary, which had a bottom drawer to it, and was practically empty, the Secretary, as a ward-room officer, keeping all his gear, but a few odds and ends, in his cabin. This drawer early attracted the attention of his servant, one of these boys, as an ideal hiding-place for the storage of cockroaches, and it soon became filled by him and his chums with their jam-pots, etc., containing them. I was having my morning wash on the top of my own chest, a few feet away, when I noticed the Secretary come out of his cabin and approach his chest. Lifting the lid, he peered inside, and shutting it again, turned his attention to the bottom drawer. As he drew it open sundry pots and dark glass bottles, all well stoppered, met his view.

Curiosity, and perhaps a latent suspicion as to pilfering of jam on the part of the boys who had the run of the ward-room as servants, impelled him to uncover one of the receptacles, when out crawled a large cockroach. Replacing the stopper, he hurriedly gathered up all the pots and bottles, and going into his cabin, threw them all overboard, out of his side-ventilating

scuttle. "Oh, oh," I chuckled, "now we shall see some fun, I expect!"

It was nearly half-past seven, and down came one of these youngsters, dressed in readiness for the muster—or undressed, as would perhaps be the more correct expression to use. With grass stem in hand, he pulled out the drawer, to find it empty. Two others had followed close upon his heels, and as they all stood looking at the rifled drawer with dismay and some suspicion of each other, down the ladder came another little group of eager boys. One glance at the empty drawer and the glowering faces of the others was sufficient. Someone had stolen a march upon them, and these first-comers must have had a hand in the business. No questions were asked. Out went the fists, and soon there was a free fight which the sentry vainly essayed to stop.

In the middle of it came the striking of the bell. The seven strokes had been given, and the raucous voices of the Master-at-Arms and the ship's Corporals were heard shouting, "Tumble up, tumble up, you boys!" But there were no responsive movements. The fighting had ceased with the first two strokes of the bell, but the boys all remained cowering in the steerage until the ship's Corporals, with their canes, chased them up the ladder to meet the wrathful Master-at-Arms, with the sequel mentioned above.

A tall story was told in the squadron of how a ship, lying astern of us at Lagos, was invaded by swarms of cockroaches, which had come on board by crawling up the cables; they were supposed to have swum from the *Vesuvius*.

We remained in Plymouth Sound just twenty-four hours, having received orders to proceed to Woolwich dockyard to pay off. It was the first week of February, 1860, in the middle of

the coldest winter which had visited England for many years. It was the year of great frosts, when there was skating everywhere, and the temperature even fell as low as 8° below zero. We went up the Thames in a snow-storm, and the old man took it into his head to strike top gallant yards and masts. The work was not done smartly enough, and so the masts and yards were sent up again for the manoeuvre to be repeated. It was most bitterly cold, and I had to be up in the foretop all the time and became half-frozen. I had no woollen gloves or mittens, so that my hands were quite numbed and I could not use them. I should have fallen either overboard or to the deck if I had attempted to descend, so the Captain of the top, with another man, lowered me down in a bowline.

The next day we passed into the "basin" in the dockyard so as to remain afloat. The bitter cold continued, and one morning the body of one of our seamen was found in a shed. He had apparently lain down to sleep after having imbibed more or less of the contents of a bottle found near him, and was frozen to death. Eleven days after our arrival the ship was paid off, and we were all dispersed to our various homes.

The usual period of leave, after returning from foreign service, was granted, at the expiration of which I found myself appointed to an old paddle-wheel steamer called the *Rhadamanthus*, employed as a home transport. I spent seven months on board of her pleasantly enough, making short voyages between the dockyards, carrying boilers and heavy pieces of machinery. I gained a great deal of experience in Channel pilotage, keeping officer's watch, and led a much more comfortable life than on board my previous ship, as both ward-room and gun-room officers messed together, and I was the proud possessor of a cabin in the long saloon under the poop-deck. All the executives were of the

navigating branch, and she was commanded by a master, "Captain" Sturdee by courtesy, in view of his position in command.

During those seven months accidents involving loss of life always seemed to occur whenever the ship was placed under a certain pair of sheer-legs at Woolwich dockyard, which, on account, came to be known as the fatal sheers. Such accidents had happened before I joined the ship, and the first time we went under them whilst I was on board, one of our bluejackets slipped off the gangway into the basin and was drowned; and the second time the slings, by which a large cylinder casing was being hoisted on board, carried away and it fell, crushing a poor dockyard labourer between it and another piece of machinery.

I was, at the time, quite close by the scene of the accident, standing on the fore-and-aft bridge, watching the hoist. I shall never forget the sight when the fallen cylinder was lifted away. It haunted me for the rest of the time I was on board, and it was really one reason why I was anxious, after the six months of "Channel groping," as we called it, to leave the old craft and join some ship fitting out for a foreign station. This I managed to do through the Captain, who kindly forwarded my application to the Admiralty, with a recommendation of his own, speaking very favourably of my services.



## CHAPTER V

## EMBARKING ON THE "CHARYBDIS"

I LEFT the old "bruise-water boat" for the *Charybdis* at Sheerness ("Sheer-nasty" as it was called in my time); it was there fitting out for her maiden voyage, being a brand-new ship. She was commanded by Captain the Honourable Disney Keane, and it was understood that we were proceeding to the East Indies, where he would hoist the "broad" pennant of a Commodore, and take charge as senior officer in command of H.M. ships in the Persian Gulf and Indian Seas, under the Admiral of the China station, to which India was linked up.

After we had rounded the Cape, however, other views prevailed at the Admiralty, and another port captain was appointed. In consequence of this we became an odd ship at Trincomali, and were sent off from time to time on roving commissions which took us pretty well all over the world, visiting many places of interest, but touching nowhere in Australia or New Zealand, and at no part of the eastern coast of the American continent during the two years and nine months I served on board of her, from November 6th, 1860, till August 29th, 1863.

It was a dull, nasty wet day when I went on board the *Charybdis*, and Sheerness I thought was the most dismal, God-forsaken place I had ever come across, with the mud-flats in the river showing up at low water, the squalid-looking cottages of the dock labourers, and the marshy fields outside. It well bore

out in its appearance the bluejackets' summing-up of his ideas about it, "The last place made by the Almighty, and there was not enough solid matter left in hand to complete it."

In a fortnight from the day I joined we were reported "ready for sea," and the Vice-Admiral in command at the Nore came on board, saw the ship's company mustered and put through a certain amount of drill, and left again under the usual salute. A few hours after he had left, we were under way, steaming out of the river. We anchored at the Downs for one night, stopped at Spithead for a couple of days, and reached Plymouth on the morning of November 23rd. Here we remained nineteen days, making good defects which had been discovered after leaving Sheerness, and for which we had to spend part of the time in dry-dock.

The prolonged stay in Plymouth was responsible, I am afraid, for the very disastrous condition of affairs in the gun-room which was discovered soon after we got to sea. Plymouth was rather a gay place. There were no music-halls, but there was a dancing-saloon, well known to Naval officers, called the "Hop," and a theatre much patronised by the bluejackets and marines, as well as the officers, and at times the audience was a bit rowdy.

The one night I went there during our stay the play was "Romeo and Juliet" and when in the "swoon scene" the curtain went up for the entry of Romeo into the death-chamber, Juliet was seen lying upon a couch the drapery of which did not reach the floor. Underneath the couch some waggish individual had placed something that should not have been there, and the sight was hailed with shouts of laughter. The poor actress, thinking there was something wrong about her attitude—too much exposure, possibly, of her person—and quite forgetting that she was supposed to be dead, began twitching her legs about

to get them more under cover, which only elicited more shouts of laughter, so up she jumped in a rage and ran off the stage.

The bluejackets, spying any chums at a distance, would call out to them, exchanging wordy pleasantries, and should any one of them happen to see in the audience an officer who was at all unpopular, they would crack jokes at his expense, as when on one occasion they shouted out to a Commander: "Eh, Billy, who whitewashed the goose's legs and put the cat in the scran-bag?"

The theatre and the "Hop" were much frequented by our Midshipmen, and one of them, a very good-looking boy, nearly got into serious trouble by going to the "Hop" one night dressed as a girl. Two young subalterns of the garrison fell victims to "her" charms, and came to blows over their rivalry for "her" favour. Fortunately the Midshipman was got away by his companions before the arrival of the police, who had been hastily sent for by the proprietor to quell the riot that ensued, friends joining in the fray on each side.

The *Charybdis*, as I have mentioned, was quite a new ship and of a somewhat new class, possessing as much tonnage and as heavy an armament as one of the smaller frigates. She was fully rigged with masts and yards, steam propulsion being still in its youthful days, and sails the power chiefly depended upon for making long voyages. She was, however, provided with auxiliary steam power to help her through a prolonged calm, or take her in and out of harbours difficult of access. She was fitted with a screw-propeller which could be disconnected from the engine-shaft and lifted out of the water, half its length appearing above the deck. But she could only carry a limited supply of coal, and could do no more than six knots under the best conditions.

We were a jolly, good-natured crowd in the gun-room, all very young and brimming over with lively spirits. I was the oldest of the "executives," and when the Captain came to learn that the gun-room owed a large debt to sundry tradesmen for, tinned provisions—sardines, jams, potted lobster and salmon, etc.—as well as wine and bottled beer, and that in addition to this most of the Midshipmen had not paid their share of the "mess-traps," I was sent for by him, and in the presence of the others, ordered to take charge of the mess accounts, and act as caterer until all the debts had been wiped out.

It was unfortunate for these youngsters, who had improvidently spent at Plymouth the money which should have gone into the mess fund, that no Mate or very Senior Midshipman had been appointed to the *Charybdis* who could have held them in and checked their wild spirits, ruling them with the strong hand according to the custom of the Service. It was also unfortunate for me, as I became a very unpopular member of the mess, when on the first pay-day they saw me standing by the side of the Captain and receiving the money for which they had to sign their names in receipt. Thirty shillings per month was deducted as their mess-money, the remainder being credited to them as payments on account of their share of the mess debts.

I became still more unpopular when, within a fortnight after we had left Plymouth, the Midshipman who had been selected by the First Lieutenant to act as Mate of the upper-deck was dismissed for neglect of duty and incompetence, and I was appointed in his place. But after all, their very natural jealousy did not last very long, and "Prince Joe," as they took to call me on account of my previous association with Royalty, soon became quite on the best of terms with most of them.

At Madeira we stayed several days, and on the Plaza, the

"Rotten Row" of Funchal, where beauty is wont to display itself, as also wealth, during the fashionable hours, by driving round and round in those strange-looking bullock-drawn sleds, gaily decorated with fringed awnings and bright-coloured paint-work, I spent some time with one of my mess-mates, watching the ladies go past.

Suddenly our eyes were arrested by a vision of beauty that captured our hearts,—a very pretty young girl, with a lady older than herself sitting by her side and another in front. Without having the slightest idea as to who the lady was, we lifted our caps and blew a kiss in acknowledgment of the smile with which she had accepted our salute.

The sled passed on, and we were still casting lingering glances in the direction it had taken; a voice at our elbow accosted us with: "Well, youngsters, have you seen the Empress Elizabeth of Austria?" It was S., our Third Lieutenant.

"No, sir," we answered quickly. "Where is she?"

"Oh, wait here; she'll be passing this way soon and I will point her out to you."

Sure enough, he did in about three minutes, and we bolted as hard as we could, without running, for we had recognised in the lady he pointed out the one we had so familiarly treated to a kiss from our finger-tips so shortly before.

It took us just nineteen days to reach the Line, and we celebrated the crossing in the good old fashion, with an official visit from Neptune with Amphitrite, his "missus," and her babies, and the members of his court.

Only two incidents occurred during that voyage from the Line to the Cape. One was a somewhat extraordinary outbreak of small-pox. Fortunately, it was confined to one case, the assistant-clerk, who was immediately isolated on the quarter-

deck in a cot, screened off with canvas, and kept strictly under guard. The other was a fire, caused by careless smoking, in the gunners' store-room next to the magazine; we just put it out in time.

We spent but a short time at Simon's Bay, the Naval station, and I had no opportunity to see Capetown, or enjoy any of the well-known hospitality of its people, as I did some six years later. From the Cape we sailed to Trincomali, on the north-east corner of Ceylon—one of the finest and most secure harbours east of the Red Sea. The voyage took fifty-three days, the longest I have been without landing at any port. There was a dockyard there, with ample stores for the squadron in the Indian Seas, but no dry dock.

Away in the harbour, at some considerable distance from the shore, is a small flat island which bears the name of Sober Island. It belongs to the Navy, and is the recreation ground for the crews of men-o'-war when at anchor there, and its name was probably given in all good faith that it really deserved it, as there were no people living upon it save the two caretakers of a small rest-bungalow for officers, where they could have a curry cooked for tiffin if they brought the ingredients, or a cup of tea or coffee. No one was supposed to land upon the island but the men coming to amuse themselves. There were no shops, and very naturally the authorities thought that the place would be as "dry" as any "Pussyfoot" of that day could have desired. Yet it was not so very long, I believe, that more bluejackets came off drunk from Sober Island after a few hours' stay there than from any other port.

The way it was managed was by an old trick which had come from the West Indies, and gave rise to the question: "How did the milk get into the coco-nut?" With the connivance of some

native with a knowledge of English, certain spots on the sandy beach were marked, and in the still and dark hours of the night a canoe would steal across from the mainland, and deposit coco-nuts at the indicated places under a good layer of sand. These coco-nuts were all well filled with either rum or gin, their milky contents having been previously removed. The spots selected were naturally far enough removed from the bungalow for the men not to be seen by the observant eye of any officer or ship's Corporal when taking away the nuts.

Whilst at Trincomali we had some tall feeding to make up for the ship's fare on that long voyage from Simon's Bay. Fowls were cheap, and more than once we had a royal dish, a roast wild peacock for dinner, shot by one of our sporting members. Then we had the most splendid curries, brought piping hot in earthenware pots from the native village, and delicious tropical fruit in great variety. Our next move was for service in the Straits of Malacca, with headquarters at Singapore.

## CHAPTER VI

## WE ARRIVE IN FAR-EASTERN WATERS

I ENJOYED my stay in Malayan waters very much, and I loved Singapore for the friends I made there and the hospitality shown to me. There was also the cheapness of the luscious tropical fruit, of which I was so fond, to please me. Such oranges! . . . So many for an anna! And such pineapples for a cent each! Then there were the "paw-paws" and custard-apples, and the "sour-sops," which the bluejackets call by a very vulgar name, and the Avocado pears ("alligator pears" in sailor lingo), which can be eaten as marrow spread upon bread with a sprinkling of pepper and salt, or as a very good fruit with the addition of a little juice from a fresh lime and a little sugar.

It was at Singapore that I learned what a delicious fruit a mango can be. It was there also that I made the acquaintance of the mangosteen, that queen of fruits which grows nowhere outside the Straits of Malacca, the exquisite flavour of which is unequalled by that of any other fruit in the world.

We had been sent to Singapore to assist the Governor of the Straits in his political dealings with the Independent Rajahs of the Malayan States. He was laying the foundation for the good understanding with them, which led in the end, under our protection, to the existing federation, which has proved such a benefit to the natives, and also in a measure to ourselves. In



company with a gun-vessel of the Indian Marine, and a small, armed Colonial steamer, stationed at Singapore, we conveyed the Governor to the mouths of several rivers. We saw nothing, however, of the Rajahs or their stockaded towns, as we remained at anchor while the Captain and the Governor proceeded up the river for their conference with the Chief they had come to visit. We were always on the *qui vive*, ready with boats manned and armed to follow on at any moment when a show of force might be thought necessary, which it was not.

Our little force very nearly came to blows, however, on our second visit to Borneo, when we were sent to bring to order a recalcitrant Chief, who had been defying the authority of Rajah Brooke, the ruler of Sarawak and founder of the existing dynasty. This petty ruler was acting under the influence of intriguing family connections of the Sultan of Brunei, the titular ruler of the largest portion of Western Borneo, and the suzerain of Rajah Brooke. His stronghold was up the Mouka River, a large town built upon piles over the river like all the habitations of the Orang-Laut (the men of the sea), pirates and traders, but pirates first, up to the time when that gallant fine old sailor, Admiral Sir Harry Keppel, then Captain in command of H.M.S. *Dido*, broke their power with the assistance of Mr. Brooke, and put an end in a very great measure to their depredations.

As we could not approach the town in the ship, it was decided to send an armed force up the river in boats as escort and support for the Captain and our political agent, Mr. St. John, Consul-General for Borneo, who were to "beard the would-be lion in his den." The launch, pinnace, two cutters and a "gig" were manned and armed, and we pushed off early in the morning. The boats were under the<sup>st</sup> command of our First and Second Lieutenants, and I went as Midshipman of the launch, which

carried a brass 12-pounder, mounted with its carriage on a "slide" at the "bows."

This time it really looked as if there would be fighting, as after going a few miles we found the river barred to further progress by a strong "boom" of floating logs moored across it, with a stockaded fort upon the bank for its protection. A small passage had been left open, but close in shore and just under the stockade. The place was full of excited Malay warriors waving their spears, gesticulating and shouting; men with matchlock guns, pointing them at us, others slewing about the "gingalls" mounted on the parapet of the fort to keep them aimed at the boats as we came up and made fast to the boom to await events. We had orders not to do anything unless the enemy opened fire.

A parley took place, and it was agreed that the one unarmed boat, with the Chiefs of the expedition, should be allowed to proceed without molestation on the understanding that the rest of the boats should remain in the positions which had been taken up, and that no attack should be made either upon the boom or the fort.

The Captain and Consul-General started off at once, and we waited patiently, hour after hour, listening to the insulting jeers and gestures of the men in the fort. Our guns were loaded with shrapnel, and rocket-tubes were ready with their awe-inspiring and incendiary missiles. Rifles also had been charged before we sighted the fort, and only required capping, and axes were close to the hands that were to use them when the moment arrived for rushing the place.

Our men were all burning to attack, and we youngsters in the boats were also with them in our desire for some hostile action on the part of the Malays to take place, and so give the required excuse. Not so, however, was it with our seniors, the two

Lieutenants, who remembered that the Captain and Consul-General as well as the gig's crew were away some miles from us in the hands of savage Malays. Happily, however, the affair was satisfactorily arranged without bloodshed. Had it been otherwise we should in all probability have suffered considerable loss in killed and wounded. Once again, as so often happens when dealing with Asiatics, courage and firmness had carried the day. The disobedient Chief made his submission and accompanied his two visitors back to the ship and was conveyed to Sarawak.

Altogether we remained on the Singapore station nearly four months, during which time we made two visits to Sarawak, one to Brunei, and another to Labuan, a comparatively small island off the coast of Borneo, but a valuable one in view of its coal-mine. This had not been opened up very long when we went there on a visit of inspection as to the facilities for coaling ships, and entered by an adit into the sides of a tall hill. We found plenty of coal, and subsequent trials proved it to possess very good steaming qualities.

Back to Singapore we went to take up our anchorage again in what was then called the New Harbour. Here we received one day a visit from the "Tumagong," the great Malay Chief ruling at Singapore over the Malays as the Viceroy of his father, the Sultan of Johore, a title now merged into that of "Maharajah" to denote his superiority in rank to that of all the petty Sultans of the various States of the Federation.

Our princely visitor, accompanied by a numerous suite, arrived on board early in the evening, after the great heat of the day was over. A tall, emaciated figure with a wizened face, he carried, in addition to the *kriss* in the waistbelt, a richly-jewelled scimitar, and wore over his *badjou* and *sarong* a handsomely embroidered

robe. After walking round the deck and inspecting the guns, of which we carried two of the very largest to be found afloat in those days (one a 68-pounder and the other a 10-inch howitzer, both "smooth bores"), he was offered refreshments in the Captain's cabin, and left the ship with the same ceremony as upon his arrival—guard of honour and salute.

He was apparently much pleased with his visit, as a general invitation was given to the officers to make use of the horses in his stables whenever they wished to take a ride. The invitation had been a general one, and we Midshipmen did not see why we should not have our share of the riding. So, determined to enjoy our rights, one Thursday afternoon a colleague, von Donop, and I started off for a ride.

We found the way to the palace of the Tumagong readily enough—a large two-storied building standing in an extensive compound—and, uttering the word "Tumagong," were ushered up a flight of steps outside the walls to the upper storey and into a spacious saloon, scantily furnished, with a row of chairs on each side and a wide divan at the other end. Squatted upon the divan was an elderly Malay, in a sort of dingy white nightgown, smoking a "hubble-bubble" pipe; he waved a welcome in the direction of the chairs, and as he made no attempt to rise, we took it as an invitation to be seated. It required several minutes of hard gazing to recognise in this very ordinary looking old cock the bird of gorgeous plumage who had paid a visit to our ship a few weeks before.

The old boy clapped his hands, and an attendant appeared, to whom he gave orders; then, taking out the mouthpiece of his pipe, he grinned at us, and we grinned at him. The servant entered with coffee, served Turkish fashion, in small cups, and we grinned at each other again across the saloon as we drank it.

The coffee was followed by sweetmeats, and then cigars and liqueurs, and we waited patiently for the arrival of some interpreter, never imagining for a moment that there was no one about the place who could speak English. Our interview was becoming somewhat boring, intercourse being limited as it was to the occasional grins exchanged whenever His Highness took his pipe out of his mouth. The afternoon was passing away, we were finishing our second cigars, and still no interpreter had made his appearance.

I could stand it no longer, so decided upon a desperate attempt to reach the old man's understanding, and thus began: "Hi, Johnny! You sawy we want 'gee-gee'!" His Highness cocked up his ears, but looked bewildered. "Yes," I continued, "we want gee-gees, animals all same cow. . . . Klick! klick! Gee-up! No savvy?" It was all to no purpose. The Tumagong could not "catch on."

Turning to my companion, "Look here," I said, "we shall never get the horses this way! Down you go on your marrow-bones," giving him a push forward. Over he went, and as he placed himself in the familiar nursery attitude for daddy to give baby a ride, I sprang upon his back, and began spurring him with my heels, whilst I beat him behind with an imaginary whip.

The effect was magical. The old fellow dropped his pipe and tumbled over with laughter, nearly rolling off the divan. He clapped his hands, said a few words to the servant who appeared, and it was not very long before we heard outside the clattering of hoofs, which told us the horses were ready and waiting for us.

Meanwhile our mutual grins had become broad smiles and laughter. We had waited long enough; it was no use wasting any more time in vain attempts to express our sense of his kind

reception of our pantomime, so with waves of the hand and "Ta-ta, good-bye, Johnny!" we ran down the staircase.

There sure enough were our noble steeds. Fortunately for me, they were very quiet animals, but I never in my life came across anything in the way of a seat so slippery as that saddle. I could not stick on it at all for some time. I was no sooner up on the one side than down I was on the other. Within the space of little over five minutes I must have fallen off as many times. However, before that memorable ride was over, I had done a good deal of trotting and some cantering, and by the time we got back to the palace I was beginning to have no small opinion of my skill as a horseman.

There was a good deal of gaiety at Singapore, both on the *Charybdis* and on shore, and I was also a pretty constant visitor at the house of Major Harvey, the Commandant at the time of the small garrison of native troops stationed at Singapore. His daughter Maggie and I were great friends, and had I been older and with more immediate prospects of a position entitling me to think of matrimony we might possibly have become something more to each other. She herself was very young, just beyond the age of the "flapper," and, being rather delicate and an only child, was allowed to do much as she pleased.

It was, though, some time before I thought of paying another visit to the Tumagong's stable, but eventually there was a strong incentive in my desire to show off before Maggie. I started off alone for the Tumagong's palace about a week afterwards. This time there was no necessity, so far as I could see, for seeking an audience of the Prince. I went straight off to the stables, where I found several *syces* and grooms standing about.

With a commanding air natural to the friend of their lord and master, "Gee-gee!" I cried, switching my riding-whip and

working imaginary bridle-reins. The grooms looked at each other, shrugged their shoulders and jabbered away, but not one of them showed any willingness to obey my order. Again I cried "Gee-gee! Trot him out!" in angry tones, pointing to a horse showing its head over the closed half-door of the stables. Still there was no movement amongst them beyond further shrugs and jabbering, and I was thinking of looking up the old gentleman, when one of them, apparently the head-man, approached and said something to me in Malay, which I naturally could not understand.

By this time my blood was up. I had come for a ride and meant to have it. All I could make out from their words and gestures was unwillingness on their part to oblige me, possibly because of the absence of any direct order. I had become very angry at this opposition, and as a last resort I repeated my order and pantomime, ending with a loud shout of "Tumagong!" and a very significant gesture. I drew my hand across my throat, clicking my tongue as I did so, intending that they should thereby understand that the Tumagong, their master, would assuredly have them bowstrung or decapitated, if they failed to satisfy the wishes of his friend. The effect was miraculous. With a last shrug of the shoulders three of them went off. The stable door was opened, and in a few minutes a magnificent black horse stood ready for its rider.

I mounted without any misgivings, thinking only about the splendid appearance I was about to make in the eyes of Maggie as a bold cavalier. I walked it out of the compound, a little shake of the bridle set the horse off in a trot, and we were getting along so well that I felt quite proud of my horsemanship. I had even done a little cantering, and so confident was I feeling that, when we got into the straight road leading to the "lines" and

my destination was within half a mile, I did not hesitate to apply my whip with a view of getting him into a bit of a gallop. Alas ! how pride does come before a fall ! I had merely touched his hind quarters with the whip ; but it was sufficient to rouse its equine wrath. The next moment I was rapidly describing, with my body, a parabolic curve through the air, and found myself on the road considerably dazed.

Fortunately I did not break either an arm or a leg, or suffer any injury to the body. I had pitched upon my right shoulder, and the only damage to my person was the loss of skin grazed away from the whole length of my face upon the same side. As I was pulling myself together, a *gharry* (carriage) drew up, and out jumped a friend, the Surgeon of the garrison. He soon saw there was nothing the matter with me beyond the barking of my face and the bit of shock my sudden flight in the air and fall had given me. He drove me to his quarters, and all damages having been repaired with sticking-plaster, and a small special decoction he gave me to drink, I sought the sympathy of my friend Maggie. It was not in vain. I had hoped to have excited her admiration as a bold cavalier ; she gave it, with pity in addition, to the wounded " hero " as I appeared in her youthful imagination, who, although unskilled in horsemanship, had yet ventured for her sake to mount and ride a fiery, untamed steed.

I subsequently learned that the horse which had thrown me was a notorious animal, known as the " man-killer." It was an Australian horse, a very vicious buck-jumper, and when I touched it with the whip, it had played me its favourite trick, jumping off the ground with all its four legs together, and simultaneously arching its back. No wonder I flew off, none but the most experienced horse-breaker could have kept his seat. It had killed a second man, one of the grooms, only the day before. No



wonder, too, the grooms had not shown any inclination to meet my wishes. They had done their best to warn me, but my persistence overruled their reluctance to see me jeopardise my life. I had quite enough of the Tumagong's horses after that adventure, and so troubled his stables no more during that stay at Singapore.

The old Tumagong, whose name was Abdurahman, became Sultan of Johore, and was succeeded by his son Abubeker. I had the honour of meeting the latter many years after this event at Constantinople, upon the occasion of a visit he paid to the reigning Caliph, Sultan Abdul Hamid. I told His Highness about the adventure at Singapore, and the description I gave him of my interviews with his father afforded him quite as much amusement as my pantomime efforts to make known my wishes had given to the old Tumagong.

On the night but one before we sailed, the First Lieutenant, who quite erroneously imagined me to be a potential rival in another direction, ordered me to remain on board, but hailing a native skiff, I went off as I was resolved to do, to the Major's bungalow to say good-bye to Maggie. We had a touching farewell, and as I got back early I thought I was safe. The next morning, Saturday, the day before we were to sail, the First Lieutenant had quite resumed his friendly manner.

But oh, what a storm was brewing! That night there was a return dinner in the ward-room, and during the course of it, one of the military officers asked his neighbour what was the matter with Woods. I had been asked to the Friday's dinner, but had sent no reply, and he wanted to know what was the matter with me, why I had not come nor sent any excuse. He had been told that my leave had been stopped, but that could not be the reason, as I was at the Major's last night.

Scraps of this conversation reached the ears of the First

Lieutenant. He asked one or two questions and then "the fat was in the fire." Nursing his wrath until the dinner was over, he sent for me on the quarter-deck. Had I gone ashore the night before?

"Yes, sir," I answered; "I could not go away without saying good-bye to some of my friends, and as you would not give me leave I went without it."

He was furious with me. His anger was tempered, however, with discretion. He might have sent me down to the "lower-deck," but he did not want to lose the services of an able and efficient "Mate of the upper-deck," who suited him in every way; so with the final, "Go below, sir . . . Your leave is stopped till further orders," the interview came to an end.

I felt very callous over the stoppage of my leave. We should be several days on the way to Hong Kong, and I confidently expected that by the time we got there, the First Lieutenant's wrath would be over.

We left Singapore on the first Sunday in September, and I never saw the place again till five years after, when I landed there from the P. & O. steamer that had brought me down from Hong Kong to join the *Barossa* for passage home. My friends the Major and his wife had left, and Maggie had married a P. & O. Captain, so I was left with an empty heart.

## CHAPTER VII

## SERVICE IN THE CHINA SEAS

PIRACY was still rife in the China Seas, and the great Chinese trading "junks" were all well armed for fighting in defence of their lives and cargoes. Piracy was, indeed, an honourable pursuit, and every ship afloat considered a fair object for attack if her inferiority in armament and fighting strength of crew warranted a successful issue to such action.

We reached Hong Kong on the eleventh day, and about a week after our arrival were placed in dry dock at Aberdeen on the southern side of the island, for an examination of the ship's bottom. In one of our departures from the new harbour in Singapore for a visit to Borneo we had grazed over a coral reef, but no great damage was done, it was thought at the time. The vessel, carefully sounded from time to time, showed no sign of leaking, and a Chinese diver who went under her bottom several times, declared there was nothing wrong with it, beyond a little of the copper sheathing missing at one or two places along its length.

This report was subsequently verified by a man who went down in a diving dress, the P. & O. Agency possessing a complete apparatus. In the full belief, therefore, that the ship's bottom was sound enough, we continued our cruising without further thought, and actually grounded on a mud bank on one occasion. When the ship, however, was placed in dock, our astonishment

was great to see a large block of coral sticking in the bottom just above the keel. It was under the "after-hold," and had gone right through to the "bilge." Had this coral rock been dislodged when we grounded or had fallen out on account of any vibration of the ship when steaming, it would have seriously endangered her safety, and possibly have led to her loss. In addition to this damage, some eighty sheets of copper had also been stripped off her bottom planking.

I had thought that my little escapade at Singapore would have been forgotten by the time we got to Hong Kong, but it was not so, as I found on our return from Aberdeen to our anchorage off Kow-Loon, although I had been encouraged in my belief that all was right again by the fact that I had been allowed to walk out of the ship without question whilst lying in dock.

We had a bit of a lark there which might have ended badly for some of us. We had come across the effigy of an old Naval buffer, the whilom figure-head of some old sailing craft. This we had hoisted up, and were using as a target for stone-throwing. We had made bets upon it, and the competition was very keen, when just as three fair-sized missiles had been thrown in quick succession, who should appear suddenly, coming round the cliffy corner of a projecting high slope, but the old Commodore in charge of Hong Kong, with a party of officers. We promptly ran to cover, and were out of sight when the old man looked up to see where the stones were coming from. He possibly thought that it was accidental, as no enquiries were made.

I also performed a little swimming feat whilst there by swimming across the harbour from the dock "caisson" and back again without landing for any rest.

From Kow-Loon we were sent up the Canton River to Whampoa, a good-sized town on the river side with rice-growing

swamps on all sides. It was an awful place for mosquitoes, and they were a veritable plague. So ferocious were they, that as "Jack" declared, they would bite through anything, even blankets and sea-boots. With mosquito-curtains over their beds, the ward-room and warrant officers did not suffer so much, except from the stuffy heat of their cabins. The men, however, did very considerably, as running about on their naked feet during the day, and having scratched at the bitten spots upon them off and on through the night, the skin would be broken, and wounds formed into which dirt entered and poisoned their blood.

We were continually sending men with festering wounds down to the hospital at Hong Kong, and some thirty or more were invalided home from such an apparently insignificant cause as a mosquito-bite. I tried all sorts of dodges to circumvent the mosquitoes, and at last found the only way to some undisturbed sleep was to get into the "main-top," where I was well above their beat.

We had been lying off Whampoa about three weeks when, having been refused leave on the third request, I thought it was time to act. I applied for a transfer for "Naval instruction," and then the truth came out. The Captain interviewed the First Lieutenant, and as a result the hatchet was finally buried; never again was my leave stopped, and never again did I receive an angry word from him the whole of the time we remained together on board the ship. But he had one little last fling at me when he left the ship on promotion in the following year. He handed me over to his successor, Rivington, a very different sort of man, with the words, "You will find Woods a first-rate Mate of the upper-deck, but he is a little too fond of the shore."

The next day the First Lieutenant took me to Canton in one of

the river-boats—great big paddle-wheel steamers of the *Mississippi* type, “beam-engined,” drawing but little water and carrying above their main-deck a towering superstructure of cabins with promenade side-walks. No Chinese passenger was ever allowed into one of these cabins, or even on the main-deck below. Compelled to go on board in single file, as they stepped over the gangway, they were made to pass down to a compartment below. European sentries with loaded rifles presided over the operation, and when all the native passengers had passed down, kept strict watch and ward over the closed hatchway.

The reason for this watch and ward upon the Chinese was to prevent any attempt on their part to capture and plunder the vessel by a sudden rush with concealed weapons upon the officers and crew, and the European passengers. This had been successfully accomplished on one occasion in one of the long reaches of the river, and no more chances were being given.

The Canton River from its various entrances up to the town itself, is not very interesting as regards scenery. Low-lying land on either side forms its banks for the most part of the way, and rice is its principal cultivation. Ranges of hills, however, are seen in the distance, and about fifteen miles below Whampoa, the rising ground was close enough to command the river.

It is here that the “Bogue Forts” stood—a name that was famous for a short spell in British minds, full at the time with the quarrel between our Government and the Chinese. The Chinese had such great faith in their invulnerability that the haughty Ruler of Canton, Commissioner of the Emperor Yeh, thought they could defy the hated foreigner and do what they liked with the Foreign Settlement.

The “Bogue Forts” were built in the days of bows and arrows, and like the Turkish Citadel Fortress built at Rumeli Hissar on

the Bosphorus, by Mahomet the Conqueror, their walls ran up the hillsides in parallel lines, to be joined by others at the back, thus enclosing an ample space for the dwelling-places of the Garrisons and the storage of their supplies. The walls were strong enough to resist assault, but they were no defence against shell-fire with all parts of the Fort's interior exposed to view.

It was not very long, after the troops and ships for the expedition had been got together, before the Chinese had been driven out of the "Bogue Forts," Canton taken, and Yeh a prisoner in our hands.

The Foreign Settlement was on an island. It consisted of comfortable bungalows and *godowns* (warehouses). We were very hospitably received by Jardine's agent, and spent our time in rambling about Canton with an essential Chinese guide.

On the third day we bade good-bye to our host and returned to the ship, and normal relations having been restored between the First Lieutenant and myself, every afternoon saw me ashore. There was nothing to be done in the way of amusement or to pass a few pleasant hours except in boat-sailing. I do not think there were any cricketers on board, or football players, for I do not remember to have seen any of the requisite gear in the possession of anyone on the ship. But had there been, neither the one game nor the other could have been played at Whampoa, for want of a sufficiently large plot of level and dry ground. In order to obtain a little excitement we had to turn our attention to the Chinese town.

In the business part of Whampoa, as in Canton, there were big paper lanterns and sign-boards hanging outside the shops. There was one long street running parallel to the river, with shops on either side. Many were the lanterns and sign-boards that adorned this street. The sign-boards did not attract us much, as they

were of wood bearing Chinese characters ; but big bulging forms of the lanterns looked so inviting that we could not resist the temptation. I am afraid we youngsters of the mess were very much like children, and that is the only excuse I am afraid I can offer for the plague we were to those poor Chinese shopkeepers while we remained at Whampoa.

Landing with stout sticks in our hands, we would march down that large street, smashing each lantern as we went along. Oh, the excitement and the chattering of the Chinese, as they rushed out to pick up the remains of their cherished lanterns, cursing us "foreign devils," as we were, with all their might, and calling down upon us the vengeance of their gods !

Landing again a few days later, we found the lanterns all replaced with new coverings, and we played the same game once more. We kept this up for a week or two, always expecting to have to make a running fight to get away from the exasperated, vociferous shopkeepers and their servants, until we had to give it up in the end for want of our objectives. The Chinese, fearing, no doubt, to attack us personally, chose the better part of valour and organised a "watch-and-removal" measure for circumventing us.

Altogether we remained at anchor off Whampoa nearly two months, and then we returned to Hong Kong, where we only stayed a week, being suddenly ordered off to Yokohama, in Japan. The day after our arrival at Hong Kong we had to take the "guard," and that night I had to row guard in the pinnace all round the European shipping at anchor in the harbour during the first watch. It was a few weeks before the beginning of the Chinese New Year when all Chinese tradesmen, shopkeepers, merchants and others who, having had dealings in money during the past year, had to balance their books and accounts and pay their debts before entering upon the new one.



So commercially honest were the Chinese in those days that rather than default, if money were wanting to square accounts, they would pillage and rob in any direction to obtain it, not stopping short even of murder to obtain their end. I have already stated that piracy was considered rather an honourable pursuit than otherwise, and vessels in the harbour had been occasionally attacked at night—hence this guard business, to stop Chinese craft from moving about in the darkness. The Chinese were most expert thieves, and were known at times to steal the copper off ships' bottoms. For this reason sentries on board always carried loaded rifles to fire upon boats approaching at night from which the proper answer was not given to the "Boat ahoy!"

There is a yarn told, which I believe is perfectly true, that a frigate lying in the Canton River had the very anchor by which she was riding carried off at night without anyone on board being aware of it. Not until she was leaving and, with topsails set, etc., was about to "cat" and "fish" the anchor, was the theft discovered. The cable had been hove short, the anchor, as it was supposed, holding her, had been broken away, and the old Boatswain in the fo'c'sle with "pipe" in mouth was ready to pipe the "heaving in sight" that would inform the Commander the anchor would soon be at the bow. The next moment, however, in place of making the signal, the old man fell back in a faint, as instead of the big "bower anchor" he had expected to see, up came an enormous stone.

No one could say, with any certainty, when this audacious robbery took place, or how it had been managed. All that could be remembered was that some weeks previously a huge junk coming down the river had let go her anchor and brought up a short distance ahead of them, just before dark, eliciting the

remark from one of the men on deck: "Look at that d——d Chinaman. I'm d——d if he hasn't fouled our anchor, I believe." By the next morning, however, the junk had vanished, and nothing more was thought of the incident, until this block of stone appeared instead of the anchor. It was then thought probable that the Chinaman had hooked the frigate's anchor with her own great "Grapnel" one, and quietly waiting for the slack water at the change of tide, had hove it up to the surface and replaced it with the stone.

Just before we left Hong Kong one of our gun-boats arrived fresh from an engagement with a couple of big piratical junks, one of which had grappled with her, when a hand-to-hand fight took place, as a handful of the gun-boat's men headed by the Second Master, jumped on board to drive the Chinamen back from the bulwarks, and cut the ropes holding them together. There were several casualties on our side, the Second Master receiving a nasty spear-wound in his throat, fortunately not near the jugular vein. He recovered, and was promoted to Lieutenant for his gallant deed. Needless to say, the two junks were soon destroyed by gun-fire, the few Chinamen found floating about being picked up and handed over for trial in Hong Kong Court, which speedily disposed of them by ordering their execution on the "gallows."

How delighted we all were to leave Hong Kong for that land of romance and wonder, Japan, which had only been opened up or limited intercourse within a very few years!

## CHAPTER VIII

## MY FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF JAPAN

WE sailed from Hong Kong on December 3rd, 1861, and then began the most enjoyable part of my whole career in the British Navy. I had seen little of the island but I remember well meeting with the nascent German High Seas Fleet, in the shape of two Prussian ships-of-war which had been presented to King Frederick, the future Emperor of Germany, by our Government after the Crimean war. They were the frigate *Thetis* and a gun-boat, and they were on a commercial mission to show the "Prussian Flag," and to induce the enterprising traders of the North German States to rely for protection no longer alone upon the great Maritime Powers, Great Britain, France and the United States, as they had hitherto been doing. All the officers on board the frigate spoke English, and we in the gun-room had become quite chummy with our opposite numbers, and used to have great sing-songs together in our respective quarters after dinner.

I may as well mention the fact that as late as 1867 the English words of command for sail-work were in use on board German ships-of-war, and I was able, I am glad to say, to throw it in the teeth of one of the German officers in the service of Sultan Abdul Hamid one day when he was making himself disagreeable. He was one of the four military experts sent to Turkey by Bismarck at the solicitation of the Sultan, when Mr. Gladstone pronounced his anathema against Turkey. The officer, an infantry inspector

who was never allowed to do very much in the way of inspecting or giving instruction, was making very sneering remarks about our military methods of dealing with the Boers.

Addressing me in the presence of several Turkish officers of high rank, he said : " You people don't know the very A.B.C. of warfare," and then went on to talk of the blunders we had made, and to prophesy further disasters.

" Hold on ! " I cried. " If you think there is anything you can teach us about fighting on land, what about the sea ? We are your masters there, and always will be. Why, you would never have had even the beginnings of a navy had we not started you with a few ships and taught you all you know. We were your instructors, and you had to use our language to acquire knowledge and training. You talk about the Boers and their successes against us, but what," I continued, " have you to say as regards the Herero rebellion ? It cost you a good deal of time and money, and but for the assistance you got from the people of the Cape, you might be fighting there still."

Before concluding my remarks about the German Navy I may mention that one of the German Midshipmen on board the *Thetis* was the first German Admiral to command a squadron of warships in the Mediterranean, sent as a demonstration of the growing strength of the Kaiser's Navy. His name was Hollman, and when he came to Constantinople on a visit to the Sultan, I met him at a dinner given at the Palace in his honour, and subsequently at a *déjeuner-d'honneur* at the Ministry of Marine. Many years had elapsed, and it was very pleasant to meet again and talk over old times in China together.

The Land of the Rising Sun was still, in the 'sixties, to a great extent, a *terra incognita*—a sealed country to all foreigners, with the exception of the three ports opened by the Tycoon's Government

for trade with the Western world. There were no proper charts ; those we possessed were mere compilations of Japanese maps and old Dutch plans, corrected by such information as had been acquired, since the Treaties were made, by vessels which had visited those seas.

All went well until we had arrived within a hundred miles of our destination, Yokohama, in the Gulf of Yedo, but then, through not knowing our real position in respect to the land, we had the narrowest escape possible from a disastrous shipwreck about dawn on an ugly-looking, foam-crested, low-lying ledge of sharp-pointed rocks. It was a very close shave, as we had been heading directly for it, in blissful ignorance of its existence. It was of such small dimensions as not to be seen from aft with the foresail set, and but for the accidental circumstance of one of the fo'c'sle men having left his pipe and baccy-box in a stow-hole corner under the bowsprit, and giving the alarm "Breakers ahead !" our first intimation of the danger would have been the grinding of our keel and the crashing of the floor timbers, as she struck upon the rocks and broke her back.

Almost immediately the sea and wind rose rapidly, land appeared both on the port and starboard bows, as well as upon the beam and quarter, and we found ourselves right in the middle of an archipelago practically unknown in respect to its shores and channels. All that could be done was to keep on as we were going, in the hope of getting safely through the opening ahead of us. Although the fires had been lighted in the engine-room shortly before four o'clock, no steam was yet ready, and we were dependent upon the sails. Judge, then, of our predicament when, one after another, in quick succession, the strong chain "sheets" that spread the topsails to the yard-arms below them carried away and fell clattering to the deck, whilst the

sails blew away in ribands, leaving us helpless for the time being to cope with the wind and waves. The vessel fell away from the wind, and we lay rolling in the trough of the heavy sea, with everything breaking loose, and washing about from side to side with the water pouring in through the gun-ports and over the bulwarks.

Worst of all, the shot and shell, kept in racks on deck ready for action, as they were in those days, jumped out of their resting-places and started off in a mad chase of the hen-coops, sheep-pen, spare spars and boat-gear which broke from their fastenings and did likewise. It was a very lively time for everyone, and several accidents occurred in the way of broken legs and sprained ankles, whilst their owners were endeavouring to rescue gear and execute orders. In vain were efforts made to steady the ship by setting the fore-and-aft sails to bring her to the wind again, whilst the storm staysails were being hauled out of their lockers. Worn practically threadbare from long usage and exposure in the tropics, they blew away as they were loosened in their brails.

"Oh, for steam, for steam!" was the Captain's cry. "Go," he said to me, "and tell the Chief Engineer for God's sake to move the engines!" As I started, "Breakers ahead!" came in a shrill cry from the fo'c'sle. I turned for a second to look at the old man, and never shall I forget the ghastly look upon his face as he muttered, "It is all over with us." So it would have been had the supposed "breakers" been anything more than a "tide-rip," such as occurs in places where there is a great difference in the tide levels, and a great volume of water has to find its way through a narrow channel over rocky, uneven ground. Over-falls and whirling waves of bubbling water are formed, looking for all the world like seas breaking over rocky ledges near the surface.

In a moment we were passing through these agitated waters, swept onwards by the tidal stream. Fortunately it was setting fairly through the channel, and the islet on the port-hand was steep too and we scraped past it without striking upon any rocky fore-shore to the safer waters beyond. It was only just as we were doing so that our engines started, and the propeller began to move, so difficult had it been to raise steam without the necessary draught for the fires. The engine-room hatchway had to be covered to prevent the inrush of water from above putting out the fires altogether, whilst the tarpaulins prevented ventilation and kept them too low to the work required. Storm staysails were set, new topsails bent, and in a comparatively short time we were buffeting away against the big seas, under a close-reefed main topsail and foresail, but with plenty of sea-room.

The engines were stopped when sail was made, and fires banked. There was not much comfort for us that day, or on the following, which was Christmas Day. It was difficult to keep anything on the galley-fires, and the gun-room was like a shower-bath, with the water continually dripping from the leaky seams of the deck overhead. All Christmas cheer was wanting, and there was no pretence of festivity. By noon the next day the gale had blown itself out, but there was still a heavy sea, and it was hardly worth while to waste coal in steaming against it, so we "hove to," waiting for better weather.

We were driven to the westward and soon lost sight of all land, but on the afternoon of Christmas Day, however, we got a glimpse of it again. Then towards sunset we had a most glorious view of Fuji-Yama, the sacred mountain of the Japanese. It was not, however, only a feast of beauty for the eye; it was a most welcome sight, enabling us to verify our position in unknown

waters, after a battle with the elements from which we had emerged in a somewhat dishevelled condition.

During the night a favourable wind sprang up, which brought us off the entrance to the Gulf of Yedo at daylight. Sails were furled, and in a very short time we were steaming away for Yokohama, passing quaint-looking fishing-boats and coasting craft with queerly-clad crews. Lovely islets and promontories came into view, verdure clad to their tree-crowned heights. Neat little villages were seen nestling in beautiful silvery-beached coves, and picturesque temples and miniature cemeteries scattered about the groves of the many evergreen trees. It was a succession of lovely pictures in all of which a striking feature was Fuji-Yama in the distant background.

The warm sun and fine weather, and the knowledge that we were away by ourselves, with the certainty of remaining for a good spell in harbour, soon put us all in good humour, and made us forget all the discomfort and danger we had passed through, to reach the gateway of this new world. There also was in our minds the pleasant thought that we should find no Admiral or any senior officer present to worry us with extra drills, and no telegraphic wires to bring down upon us sudden orders to quit. We reached our destination early in the afternoon, and anchored off the Foreign Settlement in a corner of the great gulf, the sole occupant of the harbour.

Up to the date of our making a Treaty with Japan and for some time after, ours was the only foreign Government which had established a Legation in Japan, with a Minister at the head of it, and we were, so to say, "Cocks of the Walk," in virtue of our great prestige in the East. A residence had been assigned at Yedo to Sir Rutherford Alcock, our first Minister. It was a Buddhist temple, situated in extensive grounds with shrubberies





SHINOBUZU POND AT UYENO, YEDO.  
(NOTE FOR ITS LOTUS FLOWERS.)



and flower-beds ; a large building with a good many rooms connected by a narrow, low-ceilinged passage and it had previously served for the accommodation of the priests attached to the temple.

Upon one of these occasions, when Sir Rutherford was staying in Yedo, an attack was made upon the temple by a party of Yakonin swordsmen belonging to the clan of a very anti-foreign Daimio. The attack was made at night, soon after the Minister and several of his staff had retired to their respective sleeping-quarters. A Japanese guard of Tycoon soldiery was always on duty, and, with or without the connivance of those who were on watch, these men managed to slip past the guard-house and reach the entry of the long passage leading to the Minister's bedroom.

Fotunately, however, two of the inmates, Major Morrison and Lawrence Oliphant, one of the secretaries, were awake chatting together in Oliphant's room. The door was opened, and hearing a noise in the corridor, they looked out and saw the flash of drawn swords. Stepping back, they were out again in a moment, the one with a long-thonged hunting-whip, and the other a revolver. These two men undoubtedly saved the life of the Minister, who would have been cut to pieces before he could have realised the situation and given the alarm. With the one slashing the whip in their faces, and the other potting them with revolver shots, the assassins were kept at bay until the arrival of the guard put an end to the attack. Several of the murderous assailants had fallen, and the guard secured most of the rest.

The failure of the attack was really due as much to the fact that the corridor passage was so narrow and low in height, as to the courage of the two defenders. There was no room to wield their long swords, so that they were caught by the wood

on all sides before they could reach the two brave men who held the passage.

At the time of our visit the sword-cuts upon the woodwork were still fresh-looking, and we heard the story of the attack and its defeat from those who were there at the time. One of the junior secretaries, Mr. Russell, told me how he had been standing behind the door of his bedroom, hurriedly endeavouring to put his revolver together, whilst the fighting was going on. His room was just inside the entrance, and he was in his pyjamas, just going to bed, when he heard the men coming in. He was quite unprepared for any fighting, as that very afternoon he had taken his revolver to pieces to clean it, and had not had time to put it together again. He was doing his best, however, to have it ready should any assailant break into his room, with a very lively sense all the time, as he told me, of what was likely to happen to him if any of them did.

I was told also of the great struggle to keep poor Wirgman, the artist of the *Illustrated London News*, who was a guest at the Legation at the time, from throwing himself into the tank reservoir in the madness of his terror. He had been sitting in the garden, and when the attack was made, crawled under a large bush with the idea of keeping out of view until the fighting was over. When the arrival of the Japanese guard had put an end to the fray, the "roll-call" was made, and Wirgman did not appear. He was nowhere about the Legation building, and so a search was made for his body in the grounds, under the impression that he must have fallen a victim to the assassins.

At last one of the searchers espied a pair of legs sticking out from under a flowering bush, and with the exclamation, "Oh, here is the dead body!" began pulling at the legs to draw it out. Yells and shrieks followed, with violent kicking of the

said legs. It was in verity Wirgman's body, but very much alive and strong with the strength of delirious fear. They got him out from under the bush by main force and still struggling to get away, unable in the terror of a cruel death that had mastered his brain, to recognise his friends and to understand that he was in their hands and in safety.

He was a clever artist and caricaturist. Like a few other Englishmen who went to Japan in the old days, he succumbed to its fascination, took a wife in Japanese fashion and ended his days out there.

After this attack upon the Legation a cavalry guard of Lancers taken from the military train which had disappeared with the formation of the Army Service Corps, was placed at the service of the Minister. They were a fine body of men, and made quite an imposing appearance, although their trappings were not so gay in colour as those of the regular mounted regiments. They formed the body-guard of the Minister when he went to Yedo by land, when at the same time a ship-of-war went from Yokohama to Yedo and remained there until the Minister's visit was over, as an additional precaution for his safety.\*

It was one of these official visits, about the middle of January, 1862, which gave me the opportunity for seeing the great city, the capital of the Tycoon. Although the ship-of-war might anchor off Yedo, it was well understood that none should land from her without the special permission of the Japanese Government. It looked an immensity of picturesque houses and gardens, and we longed to set foot ashore. There seemed little chance,

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\* Originally no foreign warship was allowed to anchor in the Yedo roadstead unless the accredited Representative of the nation to which it belonged was in residence at Yedo for business with the Council of the Tycoon. Trading ships are not permitted to approach Yedo at all.

however, of doing so, until two days before we were to leave, when the word was passed along that Sir Rutherford Alcock had obtained permission for a limited number of officers to land and see something of the place. Only a party of eight, including the Captain, were to enjoy the privilege, and we were told that only two from the gun-room could go. I forget exactly how it was settled. I think it was by drawing lots. In whatever manner it was arranged, I was one of the two lucky ones who represented the gun-room.

We were to lunch with His Excellency, and as we landed, armed to the teeth, as is said in novels, with loaded revolvers and side-arms, what an interesting sight met our view! An enormous crowd had assembled to see the *tojins* (foreigners) from the ships—of men, women and children. Two lines of Japanese soldiers in close formation extended the whole way from the landing-place to the entrance gate of the Legation; as our boat touched the shore, the women in the front ranks ran along the ends of the lines of soldiers on either side, pulling up their clothes as they went into the water to get as close a view of us as possible, all laughing and giggling, evidently greatly amused.

After a little walk through the grounds of the Legation and an inspection of the corridor where the fighting had taken place, we sat down to a jolly good lunch, which I and my mess-mates thoroughly appreciated. We had been told that we were to have a ride through the city to a tea-house famous for its cherry-orchards. Horses were waiting in the compound, each with its *betto* (groom) in attendance—wiry little animals, curiously caparisoned. The saddles and bridles were of some ancient Tartar fashion, I fancy, the first small in the seat and rising at each end, the bridles of silk braid with tassel fringe. The stirrups

hung from the centre of the saddle, and were nothing more nor less than large iron shoes. The horses were not shod with any sort of metal, but straw shoes were placed over their hoofs and fastened above the fetlock, and provision made for the renewal of those worn out during the course of the ride in the shape of a large bundle of them hanging at the saddle-bow of each steed.

We waited and waited about, wondering when we were to start, until it transpired that a hitch had occurred in the programme. It seems that the authorities who had made all the arrangements for our visit, had suddenly discovered that on this particular day an important festival was being held, one that only took place at very long intervals. In consequence of this, the city was thronged with many thousands of Japanese who had never seen a European, and they feared some tumult would occur at the sight of us riding through the streets. They vainly endeavoured to persuade His Excellency to postpone the excursion until the day after the next, by which time, as they alleged, the people would have dispersed and the city be in its normal condition.

Sir Rutherford, however, was well versed in the wiles of the Far East, and turned a deaf ear to all their pleading. They had fixed the day, he told them, and the ship could not remain longer. She would have to leave the next day, and he likewise would have to go back. At last Oriental obstinacy gave way to British firmness, and we heard the welcome order to "mount."

The Japanese authorities had evidently taken all possible precautions to prevent any trouble and to protect our persons in case of need. We were surrounded by a strong guard of mounted *yakonins* (gentlemen warriors) with drawn swords. Police-runners armed with jingling staves went ahead clearing

the way, and at every crossing, roadway or street, ropes were found barring all approach, well guarded by foot soldiers.

The streets were thronged with people, and when we reached the official quarter which surrounds the castle of the "Tycoon" and contains the Palaces of the Great Feudal Nobles of the Empire, and where the streets were broad and there were many open spaces, the crowd of men, women and children stood in serried ranks, six and eight deep. A very merry crowd, too, they were. None of them appeared to resent the presence amongst them of strange-looking persons from the outer world ; all were laughing and smiling, and not an insulting cry was heard or a threatening gesture seen throughout the whole course of that ride.

Yet what an extraordinary spectacle was presented to our eyes as we passed along ! The great festival in progress, the name of which I never learned, was evidently connected with what is supposed to be the most ancient " Religious Cult " of the world—the worship of " Priapus." Every individual in the crowd, whether man, woman or child, held in the hand an emblem connected with it, which many of the men seemed to treat as a joke, and held the object up to view in the face of any one of the other sex near them.

We reached the tea-house, where we were treated to tea and *saki*, and smoked sundry little pipes prepared for us by the attendant *mousmies*, and listened to some Japanese music—anything but agreeable to the ear. Then, riding back by another route, we reached the Legation, and got back to the ship just as the sun was setting.

The next day we went back to our anchorage at Yokohama.

It was quite the Feudal Age still in Japan, and it took one back to the days of King John and the Great Barons in England. From my experience of the prevailing conditions gathered during this and the subsequent visit I paid to Japan a year later, a



second visit of much longer duration, since I remained at Yokohama nearly three years, during which I picked up a good deal of the colloquial language and learned much about the customs of the people, I formed two conclusions, one being that if the end and aim of civilisation was the well-being and prosperity of the greater, rather than the smaller, mass of the people, then the system which the Japanese had elaborated was far better than any that European culture had produced.

The other conclusion was that, in spite of certain habits, the bathing of men and women in public, and the existence of a much-criticised institution, the "Yoshiwara," the Japanese women were neither licentious nor immodest. Modesty, as has been written, is but a question of latitude, and fades away more and more, according to modern ideas on the subject, as the Equator is approached. Men and women in Japan bathed together in places open to public view, and called a spade a spade. They also spoke openly of the "Yoshiwara" and "Gankiro," where ladies devoted to Paphian pleasures resided. Yet, measured by standards other than our own, their women were virtuous in their own way, very faithful to their husbands, and good wives and mothers.

Every Japanese, from the highest to the lowest, had a hot bath every day, either in one of the public washing-houses, where, in a large apartment, men and women, divided from each other only by a small partition not two feet high, scrubbed themselves, while male bath-attendants walked about in their midst, pouring over them indiscriminately buckets of hot water. When there was no public bath available, there was always the family tub—a huge wooden receptacle with a sort of fire-brick oven at one end, by means of which the water within was made to boil, for the Japanese idea of a hot bath is a scalding one.

In riding about the country we often came across a family

bathing-party. Standing outside the small one-storied wooden house was the wide, elongated tub, with mother, father, and all the children—boys and girls—washing themselves in it at the same time. As soon as we came into view, at the cry of "*Tojin!* *Tojin!*" up they would all jump, as naked as when born, craning their heads over each other to get a good view, not heeding in the least the display they were making of their persons. "*Ohio!* *Ohio!*" they would cry in welcome. "*Ohio!*" and "*saiyonara*" (good-bye) we would reply as we passed on, with an exchange of merry laughter.

On one occasion, however, our modesty was put to a very real test. We were a party of four, and had started off on rather a long ride which necessitated our stopping over the night in a small village. We had sent our grooms on ahead with our provisions, as Japanese food, except their rice, was then not very palatable to European taste, and, with orders to have plenty of hot water ready for the baths we intended to take.

It was still somewhat early in the afternoon when we got to the village, and the whole place was agog with excitement. We went at once to the bath-house, followed by the crowd, and, passing inside, we closed and fastened the door. We thought ourselves perfectly secure from intrusion, but just as the last of us had shed his garments, and we were standing in Nature's garb over the small tubs in which we were to wash, the continuous whispering and movement of feet outside grew ominously in volume. Yet, little did we dream of the assault about to be made on our privacy. A good stout pole had, however, been brought, and with a hard thrust from it at the door by willing hands, away went the fastenings. The door flew open, and there stood a crowd of laughing men, women, and girls, delighted with their success, and the view they were having of our white skins.

I felt at the moment very much like poor Captain Good in Rider Haggard's novel, when the Zulu girls stood gazing with rapture at his "beautiful white legs." They tried to prevent our re-fastening the door, and one of the men pushed a strapping *moussmie*, laughing as she struggled against it, right on top of us. Our bath was over, since they could not be induced to leave us and there was no way of fastening the door, there was nothing for it but to reassume our garments as quickly as possible, and get into the tea-house to which the bath belonged.

The Japanese fighting men were still in the days of body armour and two-handed long swords, and every day for hours could be seen in any guard-house a couple of soldiers at sword-play with their long bamboo imitation weapons "cutting" and "guarding." Bows and arrows were still in use, and numbers of them in their cases and quivers hung upon the walls of the soldiers' quarters. I saw no firearms anywhere about, but there were doubtless some antiquated specimens stored away in some of the Daimios' castles.

On their annual visits to Yedo, the great Feudal Lords travelled in state with large armies of servants and retainers, and in the case of powerful Daimios like Prince Satsuma, their processions, in passing any place, would occupy the Tokaido (the great highway traversing Japan from east to west) for several days together. Of course, a Feudal Procession was one of the great things to see in Japan, and a ride out to Kanagawa and along the Tokaido in the direction of Yedo, on the chance of seeing something of one, was often undertaken. By Treaty Rights foreigners could always ride towards Yedo as far as the ferry, where a river bars the way about ten miles or so from the outskirts of the city.

The Governor of Kanagawa, however, always gave notice beforehand, through Japanese police, whenever a great procession

was passing, and requested that foreigners should not go on the Tokaido until the march through Kanagawa was over. If affecting ignorance of the interdiction, any foreigners approached the causeway leading from Yokohama, which stands upon an islet, to Kanagawa, and the great man had already passed with his chief officers and suite, or if it was merely a minor dignitary and his household on their way to the capital, then no objection was raised by the police to their crossing over. Riding was, indeed, a favourite amusement of mine, and I had done it more than once, and been rewarded by many aspects of picturesque processions.

## CHAPTER IX

## THE WAR SCARE OF 1861

WE had been at Yokohama very nearly two months. We had settled down very comfortably, enjoying the social conditions of the place, and were very well content to be so far away from the Admiral and the rest of the Fleet. We were looking forward with great assurance to a further stay in Japanese waters, of at least another month or six weeks, when our pleasant dreams were rudely dispelled in a few brief moments.

War with America was the "bolt from the blue" which disrupted the peaceful atmosphere of our surroundings, and sent us flying with all possible speed across the North Atlantic in mid-winter. It was on Saturday afternoon, February 15th, and all hands were engaged holystoning the upper-deck. My duty as Mate of the said deck required my presence there the whole of the afternoon, and I was left in charge as "Officer of the Day" as soon as the men's dinner-hour was over, and the work on deck was started. The Captain was already on shore, and all the other "Executives" in the ward-room had left the ship after their luncheon.

As I walked about with one eye on the deck and another to windward occasionally, suddenly I caught sight of a vessel coming up the Gulf under a great press of canvas. It was a brig bowling along before a nice fresh breeze, with stun sails out on both

sides, a very pretty sight to a sailor, but a most unusual one for Yokohama at that season of the year, when navigation was almost closed in the stormy seas of China and Japan.

As she neared the anchorage, "Call away the second gig!" I shouted to the Boatswain's Mate. "Aye, aye, sir!" The pipe whistled, the boat came to the gangway, and I was soon away and alongside the brig, just as she had rounded to and let go her anchor.

I was naturally very anxious for news, but little did I expect to hear what was in the budget of the excited little Captain, who came rushing to the side of the ship. There was no invitation to step on board and have a drink. Leaning over the bulwarks, "War with America! The Admiral sent a gunboat to tow me to sea from the Yangtsze to an offing that I might bring the news to you as quickly as possible. You are to sail for Vancouver Isle at once!" he shouted almost in the same breath, as he handed down to my outstretched hand a bag of dispatches.

I started off at once for the shore, found the Captain and handed to him the bag, with a few words of explanation as to why I had brought it to him myself. He went off to the Legation, and I returned to the ship, sending back his own gig to wait for him.

It brought a tremendous change for many. We had to discharge all native servants at once, and the ward-room officers as well as ourselves were left without either cooks or stewards. We had no private store of provisions, no tinned meats, sardines, salmon or lobsters. We had no ready money, and there was no "tick" for youngsters under age, and we were going away to the other side of the world. So with a red-haired "Oirish" ordinary seaman as cook and another from the West Country as steward, and nothing to eat but our Navy rations, we were in

parlous conditions when we left Japan, which we did on the following Tuesday.

We steamed down the Gulf of Yedo, towing the brig which had brought us our orders until we had passed out into the open sea by the Uruga Channel, when we cast her off to proceed on her return voyage to Shanghai. She was the *Llanryk*, one of Jardine Mathieson's fleet of men-o'-war brigs, which in the old days used to carry the opium brought from India to the trading ports of China, fighting their way through the cordon of armed Customs and Mandarin junks and "row-boats," when the officials had not allowed themselves to be squared. These brigs carried an armament exactly the same as vessels in the Royal Navy, and were manned by Lascars but officered by Britishers; and whilst we were up the Whampoa River, one of them, as we afterwards heard, had fought a very gallant action off Formosa with four large "piratical junks," sinking two of them and badly crippling the others.

As soon as we had cast off the *Llanryk* we stopped the engines and made sail, hoisted up the propellor and stowed the anchor. Then commenced our long rushing voyage to the American continent. Our old navigator, the Master, was on the sick-list, and the whole duty of navigation fell upon my shoulders. As we were bound to reach Vancouver as quickly as possible, I decided to keep on a "Great Circle Track" as far as it could be done, as providing the shortest route by which to reach our destination; and after carrying out the necessary calculations, it was laid out upon the general chart of the North Pacific. Its vertex, however, was just to the north of the Aleutian Islands, and to have followed the track up to it we should have had to pass through them. So we diverged from the Great Circle as soon as we reached the 49° of North Latitude, and maintained a due east course, until we

struck soundings off the entrance to the Straits of San Juan de Fuca, between Vancouver and the mainland.

It took us just thirty-one days, and what a voyage it was ! Gale after gale, with an occasional lull, and most of the time under close-reefed topsails with sometimes only one, the "main," and a close-reefed "foresail." Away we staggered along before the howling wind, rolling from side to side ; so much at times that our "lower yard-arms" touched the white foam crests of the huge waves that lifted up the good ship and carried her on as they reached the stern. And with what speed ! Looking through my log-book, fourteen knots I find entered for several hours as her registered speed, and this under a close-reefed main topsail and staysail. Several other entries do I find there of eleven, twelve and thirteen.

But what a life of misery and discomfort it was ! With our comparatively heavy armament of ten smooth-bore guns on each side, each two and a half tons in weight, the constant rolling brought such a strain on the upper-deck that the seams opened and leakage started over its whole surface. We had so much water in the gun-room always, what with this leakage and water that came down the "hatchway," and ran with every roll into our den by the open door, that we were compelled to sit, most of the time, on the table with our feet on the lockers. Of course, we were battened down, but corners of the coverings had to be lifted at times to allow "watch" and "helm reliefs" to pass up and down, and to give a little fresh air, for the atmosphere was awfully fuggy. Hammocks were never rolled up, but left hanging, and those not on duty on deck spent most of their time in them, trying to lose in sleep all sense of their discomfort.

As for food, there was nothing for us but the ship's provisions—salt pork one day, salt beef the next. We ate that as we could :



no table was laid, as even with "fiddles" it was impossible to keep things in place. So we sat on the table, holding our plates on our laps, and made more use of our fingers than we did of knives and forks. The men were better off than we were, as they knew how to deal with what they had to cook, whereas our chef from the lower-deck had not the slightest knowledge of the culinary art, and sent up to us occasionally stuff in such a condition that it could not be eaten. But what annoyed us most, I think, was the occasional loss of our tea, when an extra roll had sent everything flying away in the "galley," or a rush of water had got into it and filled the ship's copper in which the tea was just being made.

In addition to all the discomfort mentioned, I had a hard time of it in other ways. I had to be on the *qui vive* continually not to lose any opportunity for taking an observation of the sun, from about half-past seven in the morning until sunset. The Captain had a very lively sense of his responsibility, and was never comfortable unless he could be sure of the position of the vessel at least twice a day. I was always on deck by the time the sun was a few degrees above the horizon, standing with the Captain by my side, watching for its first appearance, I with sextant in hand, ready to take the altitude, and the Captain the time by the stop-watch. Often we stood watching in vain for half an hour at a time for the sun to break through the wind-driven clouds sufficiently well defined to allow an observation to be taken.

It was so bitterly cold on deck, that, even with mittens upon them, my hands got so benumbed at times that it was difficult to manipulate the instrument, and one often got a bath of spray which made matters worse. It always required some twenty minutes or so of hard rubbing before the Captain's fire to

thaw my half-frozen hands so that I could handle pen or pencil to work out the solar observations.

There was very seldom a clear sky, especially in the morning. It was always cloudy, and at times a shower of rain would come along so driven by the wind as to strike upon the face with the stinging force of hail. There were mornings in particular when the sun seemed so to mock at us, and deride our efforts. Time after time I have gone below, convinced that it was utterly hopeless to expect to be able to take an observation, only to be called back again after a short interval by the Quartermaster appearing at the gun-room door with his constant message, "Please, sir, the Captain sez the sun is comin' out," and up I had to go again upon a useless quest.

On one occasion I had been so worried by these repeated useless calls to watch for the sun which would not appear, that when in the end a huge sea toppled over the "taffrail" and washed me off the "stern-gratings," I lost my temper and could not help showing it. I had fallen on the sextant and cut my face with the "index-glass," and I was soused with cold water. Quite forgetting the presence of the Captain, I came out with a volley of strong sailor language that I should be rather ashamed to repeat here.

But the Captain, true gentleman that he was, never allowed himself to hear it, but told me to go below, get some dry clothes, and change into them before the big fire in his saloon—an order I very gratefully accepted. He was always most considerate to me, and I was often asked to share his breakfast.

We struck soundings in a thick fog. It was early in the morning, and we prepared for action at once, "beating to quarters" and opening the magazines, as we knew that we must be somewhere off the coast of Vancouver, probably not far from the

entrance to the Straits that led to Esquimalt, the Naval station, and might possibly find an American frigate waiting for us.

The reason for our so thinking was that we had left Yokohama in full belief that war with America had been actually declared, and that our hurried dispatch to Vancouver was due to the fact that the American squadron in the Pacific was stronger than ours, and the *Charybdis* the nearest ship to the menaced colony of Vancouver.

We had made a splendid landfall, in spite of not being able to take any observation of the sun from which to calculate the longitude for a couple of days. When the fog lifted at last we found ourselves not far from Cape Flattery, at the entrance to the Straits of San Juan de Fuca. Before clearing for action the propellor had been lowered and fixed into position, and fires lit in the engine-room, so that we were ready to proceed at once under steam as there was no wind. The sun was shining brightly, and no enemy was in sight.

On reaching Esquimalt we found, of course, that the dispute between the two Governments, which arose out of the Federal seizure of the Confederate envoys Mason and Slidell on board the R.M.S. *Trent*, had been amicably settled, as I trust all disputes, even upon the most burning questions, between us and our American cousins ever may be.

Years after I enjoyed the curious experience of overhearing one Friday at the "Selamlık," an American lady say, as she pointed me out to a group of her friends, "There, there! Look, that's the famous Woods Pasha! He was a Southern officer, you know, and wouldn't be reconstructed, so after the war he took service in Turkey."

I always think of that incident in connection with the cover of a little book of "Artemus Ward," on which was depicted a

gentleman in a slouch hat, with his trousers tucked into his boots and fastened over his blue flannel shirt with a belt carrying a big "bowie knife" and a revolver. He is holding a bottle of whisky in one hand, and dancing on one leg, and underneath is the legend: "He won't be reconstructed and he doesn't care a——." It always makes me smile when I think of that day at the Selamlík.

We had to change our day before we made our appearance at Esquimalt, and have a second Thursday, as it was Friday with us by our old reckoning, and Thursday with those on shore.

I found life in Vancouver very pleasant. Except for the few buildings at Esquimalt, the Admiralty storehouses, and the dwellings of the officials connected with them, there were no houses to be seen anywhere from the ship; and the tall giants of the primeval forest extended down to the very fringe of the water of the fine well-sheltered anchorage in which we lay.

I remember with what delight I used to land whenever I had leave, with a haversack over my shoulder containing a fishing-line, a few potatoes, matches, a drinking-glass, and a small piece of raw meat to serve as bait for catching my first trout, and generally a hook as well. Reaching the shore, I would strike right off into the forest, heedless as to the direction I took, but careful to chip off small pieces of bark from the trees as I passed, right and left at intervals, "blazing my way" so that I might be able to find my route back again. There was no thick undergrowth as in tropical forests to impede the way, and I soon reached a stream with nice warm mossy banks upon which to recline.

All the streams were teeming with trout—not of any great size, but quite large enough for half a dozen or so to make a good meal. Picking up a little dry wood and stripping off some

bark, I soon started a fire and boiled my trout, and then roasting my potatoes in the ashes, I sat down and feasted with some sort of the same feeling as Robinson Crusoe on his lonely island.

What I enjoyed also were the watering expeditions upon which I was sent with the launch. There was a famous watering-place, a large spring, not far from the shore, about a mile or so away from the ship on the other side of the promontory. A canvas tank was fitted under the thwarts with a cutter carrying water barricoes to tow us down to the spring. I had the strictest orders not to allow any of the men to move away from the boats, except to pass backwards and forwards with the barricoes, as Vancouver was a great place for losing men, and once away from Esquimalt, there was no getting hold of them again.

One day I was quite surprised when ashore by the arrival of two of my shipmates. They were both Midshipmen, sons of clergymen, and wild youngsters. They were always in trouble, and their leave had been stopped for some time, so they had broken out of the ship and hired horses at a livery stable in Esquimalt and started off for a ride. They were anxious to find out where they were, and make enquiries as to a road for a further ride. They paid dearly for their few hours of freedom in extra watching on deck and further long detention on board. Eventually they were both dismissed, the Service as Q.H.B.s (Queen's hard bargains).

Those were the days when Victoria, the capital of Vancouver Island, was but a straggling collection of wooden-frame buildings, with only "corduroy" pavement to enable one to keep off the muddy streets in wet weather. The roads also, where there were any, were but muddy tracks and patches of "corduroy" over swampy ground. Victoria was several miles from Esquimalt,

and so the distance was usually traversed on horseback, which was the *raison d'être* for the stables I have mentioned.

There was one inmate of those stables, a great favourite with Naval officers. He was a steady old goer named Jack, and had earned his position in the affections of the Naval "clientele" from the fact that he always brought home upon his back anyone who started with him, whatever change might have taken place in the meanwhile in the mental condition of his rider. If the latter fell off—which occasionally happened from too much attention to the "bottle"—Jack would stand by quietly until someone came along to pick up the fallen one and help him to regain the saddle. I can never forget the comical scene as I once came across the old horse sniffing at our Assistant Surgeon as he sat in the road looking up at him. He was looking at him so appealingly that Jack was evidently trying to express his sympathy. With my assistance he got once more upon his back, and we reached Esquimalt without further mishap on his part, and fortunately the long rest in the road had sobered him sufficiently to allow of his getting quietly to his cabin without attracting any attention.

We had arrived at Esquimalt only a few months after the rush to the Cariboo gold diggings in 1861, and Victoria was full of miners waiting for the advent of spring to return. In addition to the old stagers came a new lot of recruits to the mining armies, emigrants from the United Kingdom and other countries, brought from their homes by the lure of gold.

There was one little group of four with whom we became well acquainted, as one of its members was a retired Commander of the Royal Navy, and knew our First Lieutenant. Another member was a clergyman, the third was an Irishman who had joined the ship at Panama. With the exception of the Irishman, not one

of them knew anything about mining. But they were all full of hope, and very keen to get away on their long journey to the Cariboo Mountains to peg out their claim and commence shovelling up the gold. The fourth and youngest of the group was a fine young fellow from the Fen Country, a splendid specimen of the old Viking breed, who always made me think of Hereward the Wake whenever I saw him. I mention him particularly as we met again three years afterwards in Japan, and we became great friends.

The First Lieutenant allowed our sailmakers to make a tent for them, and the ward-room gave them a dinner on board before they started for the mainland to set forth upon their adventurous journey.

I had, before I left, one adventure which might have ended badly. I had gone off on one of my usual strolls in the forest, and had reached the shore outside the harbour. There was a small islet not far off, as it seemed to me. It was a very hot day, and I thought a swim would not be a bad thing. Off went my clothes, and with a rush I took a dive into the clear blue water. It was in the month of May, and the water was still very cold. After the first sting was over I felt the temperature bearable, and I took it into my head to swim to the islet.

It was further than I had thought, and by the time I reached it I was a bit done up, and I began to feel doubtful as to my ability to return. There was, however, nothing for it but to get back as quickly as I could. The islet, of course, was uninhabited, and there was not a soul in sight on the mainland, and I knew it would be utterly useless to try to attract attention by shouting. I could not remain on the islet all night without food or clothing. So in I plunged again, and fortunately I just reached the shore before I was completely exhausted. I was quite blue, my teeth

were chattering, and I had not sufficient strength to put on my clothes properly. All I could do was to wrap my garments round me and start off along the shore, shouting as loudly as I could.

Luckily I soon caught sight of some smoke, and making for it as fast as I was able, I found myself in front of a settler's house with its owner in the doorway. A few words made him wise as to my plight, and he ran in and soon brought out a bottle of whisky. He poured out nearly a tumblerful, the whole of which I drank off at once. It did not go to my head at all, but quickly brought back warmth to my body and undoubtedly saved me from rheumatic fever.

We had anchored in Esquimalt harbour on March 23rd, 1862, and we left again on July 8th, so that we were there just fifteen weeks and a day ; a pretty long spell of rest at anchor without a single break even of half a day.



## CHAPTER X

## OFF TO THE SOUTH SEAS

WE had variable winds and calms for the first week after leaving Esquimalt, and then, meeting the "North-East Trades," away we bowled upon our course to the south-westward for Honolulu, in the Sandwich Islands. What delightful sailing that was . . . the wind blowing regularly, always from the same direction, and with the same force !

All around at a few yards' distance was ever with us at night a ring of golden radiant light which seemed to travel with us, like some enchanted guardian spiritual essence. Within this golden ring, fiery serpents were to be seen darting about in all directions, as if watching to deal with anything that might have succeeded in passing the guarding cordon.

This beautiful sight was due, of course, to the countless millions of the very bright animalculæ which exist in the sea in certain parts, throwing off phosphorescence and light when disturbed. As the ship cut her way through the water, little waves were thrown in successive lines of fire, trailing away from the ship, the end of the one joining up with the next and so forming a ring as they closed in around her. The fiery serpents were also due to the same cause, frightened fish dashing out of the way of the huge monster. I have seen this phosphorescence in many parts of the great oceans, but never to such an extent and in such a beautiful form as on this voyage.

We had three weeks of this ideal sailing, and then it came to an end with our approach to Oahu (Wah-hoo) Island, on which Honolulu is situated. It looked far off like a cloud on the water.

The Hawaiian kingdom in those days was ruled by a descendant of the old heathen chief Kamehamehah, who had made himself master of all the islands after several sanguinary battles subsequent to the tragic end, at Hawaii, of poor Captain Cook, the great navigator.

The security of the harbour made Honolulu the favourite resort for "sperm-whalers" working over the North Pacific. Quite a number of them used to spend the winter season there, and after the missionaries had found their way to the islands, and the old conqueror with all his people had adopted Christianity, more or less, several marriages took place between settlers who followed the missionaries, and officers of whaling vessels, and daughters of the Native Chiefs, even members of the Kamehamehah family. Queen Emma, the Royal Consort at the time of our arrival, was the issue of one of these marriages. They were very comely, these native girls, with lovely eyes and in youth beautiful figures. They were also well favoured in feature, and very lively.

There was a British Commissioner residing in Honolulu, as the kingdom was in a way under our protection. It was a curious situation, however, the United States being also connected with the guardianship of the youthful kingdom's rights.

Its flag carried in the upper canton the British Union Jack, and the "fly" was composed not quite of the red and white horizontal stripes of "Old Glory," but of red, white and blue ones alternately.

The town of Honolulu was composed of ship-chandlers' stores and shops, and the villas of the residents. The streets were

broad and clean, and there was an air of prosperity about the whole place. The chief occupation of the settlers, apart from the business people, was the raising of cattle for their hides and tallow, and breeding ponies. The sugar and rice-growing had not yet started, and cold storage was unknown. Hence the cheapness of meat, beef being only 2d. a pound for the best "cuts."

Social life was very pleasant, for the colonists in their far-off, lonely homes—as these were in those days before any steam communication existed between the island and the American continent—were very glad to meet visitors who could be received into their families. Naval officers were made particularly welcome, and I was soon upon the most friendly footing with several families, and even now, after the many years which have elapsed since I last saw Honolulu, I still look back with great pleasure to the rides (we could hire a pony for 2s. 6d. a day), picnics and dances I there enjoyed. More Americans than English were living in Honolulu, and it was there that I made my first acquaintance with American ladies, and found some delightful companions amongst those somewhat younger than myself.

It is curious to think that up to the time of Captain Cook's last visit to the islands no native had ever seen a horse, and that by the time we arrived there, the country was not only well stocked with cattle, but with horses as well, and that the natives, both men and women, were fearless riders. A most picturesque sight it was to see a number of these Hawaiian girls flying along the roads with their riding skirts of printed cottons of every hue and pattern streaming behind them, and their raven locks as well. They rode astride, bare-footed, with the side of the stirrup held firmly between the big toe and its neighbour. With garlands of jessamine round their necks and flowers in their hair, as they rode past smiling and laughing and flashing bright glances from

their lustrous eyes, they looked very fascinating. Seeing them helped me to understand the "Mutiny of the *Bounty*," though it was not the dusky beauties of these islands that led the men to forget their duty, but their cousins of Tahiti. How sorry we were to leave Honolulu !

Then came another long spell of ideal yachting, ending with our arrival at Tahiti, just one month after leaving Honolulu. We only remained eight days in Tahitian waters, but, short as was our visit, it was long enough to make me feel and understand all its glamour.

The approach to Oahu was pleasant enough, but the view of Tahiti as we sped towards it and neared Papeite, the principal town of the Society Islands, was far more entrancing. Ringed with a belt of silver, the foaming crest of the surf glistening in the sun as it broke on the coral reefs, the island rises from the light turquoise-coloured sea, with its fringe of golden sand, in a succession of hills all clothed with tropical verdure to the very peaks in which they end. We passed through a gap in the circling reefs and entered at once into the smooth, clear blue water of Papeite Bay, and there before our eyes, among the coco-nut groves along the shore, were the mat houses of the natives, and, standing each in its own large garden, the villas of the colonials.

The foreign community was not nearly so large as at Honolulu, and society was more mixed. It was composed of the French officials, who held most of the posts at the Administration, and the shopkeepers and traders. European ladies were scarce, but there were a few, wives of the officials and others, and many of the colonials had married native ladies and were the possessors of charming daughters, very fascinating, some of them, in their style of beauty.

The residents gave a warm welcome to any newcomers, whatever might be the flag under which they were sailing. We, as Britishers, were specially well received, for the Crimean War was still remembered, and the colonials vied with each other in providing entertainment both for day and night. Every day of that wondrous week there was either a riding-party or a picnic, with a dance to follow, and I went to every one of these entertainments, and fortunately I had acquired a knowledge of French.

What a jolly week that was, and how it made me smile when, many years after, my thoughts were carried back to one special dance and a subsequent stroll in the Governor's garden by reading a few words in that most delightful book, "South Sea Bubbles," by the Earl and the Doctor: "Oh, that naughty princess!" Perhaps I may have thought my princess a little naughty, too, but I am not going to say so.

That I was able to take advantage of all these invitations was entirely due to my position as Mate of the Upper-deck. I had no watch to keep, except the "morning," ending at eight o'clock, and as most of the work on the Upper-deck was finished in the forenoon, when the ship was in harbour, I readily obtained leave in the afternoon whenever I wanted to go ashore. But it was rather a tax upon my powers of endurance to have to go through the twenty-four hours of each day with little or no sleep. I could never tear myself away before the last dance was over, and it was occasionally very close to four when I got over the gangway and took over charge from the officer of the middle watch.

I never, during that week, gave myself time to undress, to say nothing about taking a snooze before I went on deck. Then, all the excitement at an end, came the craving for sleep. There was always an hour to wait before work commenced. It was impossible for me to keep my eyes open during that hour, so,

with a bucketful of water by my side and the friendly Quartermaster close at hand to throw it over my head at the slightest sound of anyone moving about, either in the Captain's cabin or the ward-room, I settled down for a snooze and was soon fast asleep. Then, roused in time to muster the watch and idlers, and give the order to "scrub and wash decks," I used to strip and stand in front of the fire-engine pump, and have the nozzle of the hose directed upon my face and all parts of my body. It soon freshened me up and knocked away all desire for sleep.

We visited three other islands of the group—Huahine, Raiatea and Bora-Bora—only remaining, however, a few hours at each, just time enough to land and have a look at the principal settlement. At Bora-Bora we found an old sailor patriarch surrounded by his dusky family of sons, daughters and grandchildren. He had deserted many years ago from a whaling-vessel, married the daughter of the principal Chief, and settled down as the virtual King of the small conical, high-peaked island.

The Bay of Papeite had been the anchorage of the ill-fated *Bounty* when the crew, under the guidance of the botanical party which accompanied her, were getting together the young bread-fruit trees which were to be transplanted to Jamaica and other West Indian Islands to provide a cheap food for the slaves.

Our orders, after leaving the Society Islands, were to pay a visit to Pitcairn Island and supply any little requirements of the islanders, a portion of the descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty*, who had returned from Norfolk Island to their original home.

This story of the *Bounty*—one of the most romantic tales ever written about the sea and sailors—is well-nigh forgotten now, but it originated in the petition to the Government of people interested in the West Indies, shortly after the discovery of

the islands by Captain Cook, to dispatch a man-o'-war to Tahiti to carry off bread-fruit trees for the purpose specified above. A brig, called the *Bounty*, was selected for the voyage, and the command of the expedition given to Captain Bligh, a Naval officer of distinction. The second in command was Lieutenant Christian, a member of an old Manx family.

These two men were of very antagonistic dispositions, the one being rather moody and morose, and the other a bit of a martinet and very captious in his criticism. Captain Bligh found fault frequently, and Christian was often angered by his remarks. All through the voyage to Tahiti there had been much bickering between them, and the treatment he had received from his Captain had rankled in Christian's mind. The men also had been very much harassed by harsh discipline and the exhausting work entailed in battling their way round Cape Horn.

However, on arrival at Tahiti, there was a different atmosphere on board. The ship was lying well moored in a nice snug harbour. There was no more hard work handling the sails in gales of wind and very cold weather, and most of the men were employed on shore. They were received by the natives as superior beings, and they readily turned to supply them with all they thought they might like in the way of food. They took to themselves wives from among the young and comely women, and, in accordance with native custom, one of the brothers attached himself to his *quasi* brother-in-law as a sort of guardian servant.

All was going on well ; the work was progressing rapidly—too rapidly, as it seemed after a time to the men and their wives—and when nearing the completion of the work on shore, four men deserted. Captain Bligh immediately went off with his marines and arrested several of the Chiefs, took them on board, and threatened to kill them unless these deserters were given up

at once. The men were caught and brought back, and, to the horror of the Chiefs and all the natives who witnessed the flogging, they were each given four dozen lashes.

Shortly after that, some women who had swum off from the shore were discovered, endeavouring to cut the ship's cable—in those days not of chain, but of thick strands of hempen rope closely twisted together—so that the wind might drive her upon the coral reefs. This decided Captain Bligh to leave at once, which he did the next morning. He was quite ready since he had completed his "mission" at Tahiti and was looking forward to a successful return to England, after delivering his cargo in the West Indies. This mood continued all through the day, and he felt so softened towards Christian that he made an opportunity to walk up and down the quarter-deck with him after dinner and show his altered feelings.

He went to rest that night with pleasant dreams, to be awakened in the middle of them by a harsh voice shouting: "Get up and dress!" There stood Christian and several men with drawn cutlasses in their hands. Meanwhile the rest of the mutineers hoisted out the long-boat, placed in it a certain amount of provisions, some masts, sails and oars, and then all the officers and men who refused to join them were forced to embark. The Captain was placed with them and they were ordered to clear off; as they did so a compass was handed down, at the request of the Captain. The boat started off on its long and dangerous voyage to the nearest outpost of civilisation, the Dutch East Indies; the last words in their ears, uttered by the men on board the *Bounty*, were: "Hurrah, for Tahiti!" The vessel arrived at Tahiti and the men rejoined their wives on shore.

Christian then prepared to take the ship to some unknown island, so that they could not be traced, in the very



improbable event of the news ever reaching the British Government by the arrival of the long-boat at any place where there were Europeans. That boat, however, did manage to reach Timor, one of the islands of the Sulu Sea, under the dominion of the Dutch Government, after a most adventurous and remarkable voyage of over 4,000 miles. The store of provisions was just made to eke out, as also the stock of water, but the men were all in an exhausted condition, and many seriously ill, when they reached Timor, and but for a providential shower of rain when passing the Barrier Reef off the Australian coast, few, if any, would have survived to relate their wondrous story.

Discipline was well maintained throughout all the terrible strain of the great privations to which fate had subjected them. Captain Bligh was able throughout to keep them going upon the very smallest ration imaginable ; with a pair of scales made from the shell of a cocoa-nut, he weighed out the portion for each person, with a musket-bullet on the one side and the biscuit on the other. The Dutch on the island were very good to them, and after a long spell in hospital they nearly all recovered and were sent to a port in the East Indies, from which they sailed to England.

Certain relics of this wondrous voyage in an open boat are, by the way, preserved in Greenwich Hospital, and are to be seen in what is called the Painted Room, where the Nelson relics are also on view.

As soon as their story became known to the Admiralty, a man-o'-war, called the *Pandora*, was sent out to capture the mutineers. She swooped down upon Tahiti, and before very long the whole of the crew of the *Bounty*, save those who had sailed away with Christian, were prisoners in irons and handcuffs, on board the *Pandora*, in a prison on deck specially constructed for the purpose.

On the voyage home the vessel struck upon the Barrier Reef, and was so badly injured that there was barely time enough for the crew to embark in the boats before she foundered, taking down with her all the prisoners, with the exception of two. Both of these were youths, the one a Midshipman and the other a first-class boy, and they owed their lives to the pity of one of the prison guards, who threw to the Midshipman a key which enabled him and his companion to unlock their fetters. On arrival in England they were tried by court-martial, found guilty of mutiny in not leaving the ship with their Captain, but pardoned on account of their extreme youth at the time, and their want of experience. That Midshipman was readmitted into the Royal Navy, in which he rendered distinguished service, and attained Flag rank, dying an Admiral.

Christian did well in selecting Pitcairn Island as their refuge. He knew of its lovely position as he was a shipmate of the man whose name it bears at the time when he discovered it. Rising precipitously from unfathomable depths to a few hundred feet above the sea, it has a most inaccessible appearance, as we saw it, surrounded by tall cliffs, seamed and seared by the action of the waves. Discipline was, of course, entirely at an end after the mutiny, and only a few of the men could be persuaded to accompany Christian when he sailed for Pitcairn Island. They embarked with their wives and their other Tahitian connections, and with such live stock as they possessed. After beaching their vessel, everything was removed from her which was thought useful, and then, secretly, one night Christian set her on fire in order to destroy all traces of their presence on the island, and to cut off the retreat of any who might subsequently have wished to go away.

At first life was very pleasant ; with the aid of the Hawaiians

they built houses of native fashion, but the monotony, and the life of indolence, told upon them by degrees, and they grew quarrelsome. Then, after a time, one of the men discovered how to make toddy from the water of the cocoa-nut—the so-called milk—by fermenting it. It is a very potent liquid, and two of the men were killed by falling over the cliffs in a state of intoxication.

In the course of three or four years, disease also carried away Christian and some of the Hawaiians, and one of the white community was left without a wife. As there was no possibility of securing another, he seized one of the other women by force, and in revenge was murdered one night by her husband, whereupon the other white men, fearing for their own lives, killed the remaining Tahitian men. This roused the women to such furious anger that they rushed upon the remaining white men with hatchets and killed them all, save two, who were in another part of the island at the time.

By the time they returned to the settlement the anger of the women had cooled down, and there was no more thought of killing. One of these men was called John Adams, and the other was Charles Young, who had been the Paymaster's clerk on board the *Bounty*. This man Adams was of a superior mental calibre to the ordinary sailor of those days, and had been brought up by a very religious, God-fearing mother who, when he went upon the voyage, had placed a Bible in his clothes sea-chest. Since his arrival on the island he had been reading the Book and reflecting much upon his past life, and now, thinking over the results of that mutiny and the violent deaths of all his companions but one, he felt called to repentance. He determined to make amends by bringing up the numerous children born of these marriages as civilised Christian children, so far as he was able.

Like a second Moses, he became the law-giver and prophet. He divided off the island in accordance with the size of each family. He started a school-house, he manufactured ink, the native women made paper out of certain leaves, and he taught them to read and write. Then, as they attained marriageable age, he selected their partners, taking care that there should be no violation of the laws of consanguinity. They led a very peaceful, tranquil life as the years rolled on.

Many years had elapsed when, early one morning, a large sailing-vessel was seen close to the island, becalmed. She was a whaling-ship, and being short of water, had approached this island in the hope of procuring some there. Imagine their surprise when the boat came off with men of light complexion, dressed somewhat like sailors, asking in English, "What ship is that?"

"Who are you?" was the reply.

"I am Thursday October Christian," was the answer.

The speaker was the eldest son of the leader of the mutiny, born on the island on the first Thursday of October, hence his name. A rope was thrown to them, the boat made fast, and they came on deck.

The vessel received a supply of water, vegetables and fruit, and sailed away to carry the news to the other world that a lonely island in the Pacific was inhabited by descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty*, which had long been forgotten. The report naturally excited great interest in England, and a man-o'-war was sent to verify the story. Her appearance off the island caused great dismay, as the people thought the ship had come to take away their beloved teacher. The Captain came on shore, made his investigation, and they were soon reassured by being told that no harm either to him or to them was intended.



[Sketches by the Author]

VIEW OF THE LANDING-PLACE ON THE N.W. SIDE OF PITCAIRN ISLAND.



[Sketches by the Author]

VIEW OF THE N.E. SIDE OF PITCAIRN ISLAND.



John Adams by this time was well on in years, and there was no thought on the part of the British Government to call him to account for anything connected with that mutiny, more especially as the report sent home showed how much he had done to redeem his offence against Naval law and discipline, and he was officially pardoned. The islanders were taken under the protection of the Government. Once a year a man-o'-war was sent to pay them a visit and supply the wants of the community in the way of materials for clothing, needles and thread, etc.

At last a time arrived when the population had become too great for an island two miles long and one mile broad, so the Government decided to transport them all to Norfolk Island, which, formerly a penal settlement, had been disestablished and, with all its convicts and warders removed, was uninhabited. This intention was carried out, but after a time two families, descendants of Young, the purser's clerk of the *Bounty*, feeling the pangs of nostalgia too great for endurance, went back to Pitcairn Island, and our mission was to see how they had been getting on.

Pitcairn Island lies about 1,200 miles to the south-eastward of Tahiti, dead to windward, and we had to make two long "legs," beating up against the south-east trade, to reach it, and it took us just twenty-four days. I had a good deal of leeway to make up in the way of sleep when we left Tahiti, as I had not had much more than an hour or so of it during each twenty-four that we spent there. I made it by seizing every occasion for a snooze on the gun-room lockers.

It had been blowing pretty stiffly for several days before we reached the island, but the wind had been gradually moderating from noon of the previous day, and by the time we had sighted the place it had almost died away. Pitcairn Island has

a most inaccessible appearance from whatever direction it is approached. As we neared the shore we saw a small beach, but looked in vain for any signs of a landing-place. There was here just a slight bend in the shore-line, but no shelter whatever from the sea, and the enclosing cliffs rose precipitously to a height of several hundred feet. We subsequently learnt that the only means of reaching the interior was by means of a rope, and it is called Rope Bay in consequence.

Skirting these cliffs, we rounded Adam's Rocks and came in sight of Bounty Bay. The scenery about the bay is very striking. The sea, raised by the high wind of the previous few days, had not yet subsided, and the waves were dashing upon the tall, rugged cliffs to fall back in miniature waterfalls. Above these cliffs the island rose to a considerable height, its whole surface clothed with the luxuriant foliage of the tropics. Fruit-trees were there in abundance ; one could see the ripening oranges and bananas, and paw-paws, and as for coco-nuts, the trees which bear them appeared to be growing everywhere near the shore, even in the very clefts of the rocks. Passing along, we caught sight of the roofs of the settlement peering out from the green foliage, and the British Ensign proudly flying over it all.

Then, as we neared the north-west end of the island, a canoe appeared with one man in it. A rope was thrown to him, and, as he stepped on board, he announced himself as Moses Young, and that he had come out to show the way to a landing-place. He gave an account of the island ; he said that only two whalers had come near the island since H.M.S. *Calypso* had called about two years previously, and that they were in want of a few trifles only, including a little powder and lead for bullets, as they were rather afraid trouble might well arise should some deserter from a whaler suddenly appear amongst them. There were only



two men, himself and his cousin, also called Young, and three boys, the eldest of whom was only seventeen and the youngest two, for the protection of their two wives and ten girls, several of whom were well grown, and they might possibly be driven to extreme measures. So, as all their ammunition had been exhausted, they very much required a further supply.

This numerical disparity of the sexes had rather worried the eldest Young, and apparently he thought that our arrival might help him to solve a great difficulty. It was a sort of law with them that as each girl arrived at a marriageable age a husband should be provided for her, and that no young girl could be wedded whilst there was one of greater age still unmated, and here was the poor fellow faced with a knotty problem. Sarah McCoy, his step-daughter, was nineteen, and the only male who approached her in age was a brother of seventeen. Then there were two other sisters of fifteen and twelve, who in that ripening climate would soon reach womanhood. They had expected to have been followed by other Norfolk Islanders with prospective husbands amongst them, but none had come, although four years had elapsed since they had resettled in their old home. So what could be done to meet this unfortunate state of affairs? Would the Captain, he asked, allow one or two good-dispositioned young sailors to settle amongst them, if they would like to do so?

I do not think there would have been much difficulty in finding volunteers, after the report brought back by the visiting party, but our Captain shook his head and turned a deaf ear to all pleading on the subject. They were such pretty creatures, these young girls, with their large lustrous eyes and comely features, with flowers in their tresses and garlands of jasmine round their necks. They were all in loose white dresses descending just

below the knees, disclosing well-shaped feet and ankles, for they wore no shoes or other covering, and were as graceful and agile, and as sure-footed on their bare feet, as the young goats on the island.

Piloted by Young, we ran alongside a ledge of rocks forming the entrance end of a narrow ridge running upwards to the top of the cliff. The pathway along this ridge was so narrow and slippery in parts that I doubt whether any of us could have managed it without the assistance of the young girls, who came bounding down to help us. They embraced us all when we reached the summit, where the remainder of the islanders, old and young, had assembled to welcome us. It is the highest point on the island, and the view embraces all its rocky promontories, its little hills and valleys, and its shady groves and cultivated gardens. There are several caves on the island, one of which had been fitted up by Christian as a special hiding-place in case of the very improbable event of a ship paying it a visit. We saw Adam's grave, to which there is a head-stone stating that he died on March 28th, 1829, "in hope."

Except the houses of the two families, we found the settlement in a very ruinous condition. The palm-leaf roofs had fallen in, as also the floors and wooden frames. Their houses are reminiscent of ship-life. They are divided into two cabins, as it were, the one being for the accommodation of the heads of the family, and the other the general workroom and sleeping compartment for the rest of the family. A series of bunks is fitted round the one end and the two sides, each with its little port closing when required with a sliding shutter, and everything about these sleeping-berths looked very nice and clean. They still make the *tappa*, the native cloth of the Pacific Islands, from the bark of a sort of mulberry-tree, and use it for sheeting and clothing when other material is wanting.

We left just in time to reach the ship before the sun went down. They all accompanied us to the top of the ridge where a sorrowful farewell took place. They were all so disappointed that we could not prolong our visit. We parted with kisses and tears from our youthful guides, and they all stood watching us until we had passed out of sight. We had supplied all their requirements, except the possible husbands, but as our Captain promised to write to Norfolk Island about their situation, we left them with hope that even that desideratum would be supplied before many months were over. They were also assured that within another year or so they would most certainly receive the visit of another man-o'-war. They were not particularly anxious to see whaling vessels arrive off the island, as on the last occasion some of the men of a boat in which the Captain had landed had been rather too free in their behaviour.

Life on the island runs upon very easy lines, very attractive to a sailor. No work, a warm climate, and abundance of food. The inhabitants have a very plentiful supply of poultry and many goats and pigs, and the sea near the rocky shores is teeming with fish.

It was October 27th when we left the island, and we reached Valparaiso on November 19th, after a fine and pleasant voyage of just over three weeks.

Thus ended my cruise amongst the Pacific Islands, which left with me ineffaceable memories. Many years after, when reading Pierre Loti's book on the South Seas, I felt quite a feeling of nostalgia. All the glamour and fascination of those soft, warm climes came back to me.

## CHAPTER XI

## GAY TIMES IN THE SEAMAN'S PARADISE

VALPARAISO (Paradise Valley), the great sea-port of Chili, and a fine city even in 1862, occupies the southern part of a small bay, not much more than a bend in the shore-line. Although there was no harbour in those days, and the anchorage was in reality nothing but a roadstead, it was safe enough for shipping for the greater part of the year, and it was the first port of call for every vessel which came round Cape Horn to visit any part of the West Coast of America.

It was a veritable paradise for seamen, for there was everything to be found ashore that formed the delight of the sailor in the olden times, and brought compensation for the hardships of the voyage required to reach it. The three spurs of land nearest the town were crowded with houses, many of them inhabited by members of both sexes all eager to welcome Jack, and to open the portals of the drinking-shops and dancing-saloons to the gay visitor with money in his pockets. I do not know what the real names of these quarters were, or what they may now be called, but in my time they were known as "Fore Top," "Main Top," and "Mizzen Top." The twanging of harp and guitar could be heard at all hours of the day and night within their gay purlieus.

We only anchored eleven days at Valparaiso on our first visit, and then went up to Callao, the sea-port of Peru, where we

remained nearly two months. On the whole I had a very good time at Callao, as I dexterously managed to get ashore most nights for dancing, of which I was very fond. I had made the acquaintance of an Anglo-Peruvian family of the name of Higginson, and met several pretty *señoritas* and improved my Spanish, of which on our voyage from Tahiti I had managed to pick up a very useful vocabulary.

It was at Callao that I saw my first bull-fight. There is cruelty about it, undoubtedly, as there is about all sport in which animals are killed for the amusement of human beings, and "bull-fighting" in Spain and Mexico is a very sanguinary sight, and with the exception of the final duel between the bull and the matador, to me a very disgusting one. But as practised in Peru it is a magnificent spectacle of fine horsemanship, nerve and courage throughout. Instead of the sorry-looking old screws, worthless worn-out horses brought blindfolded into the "plaza," that they may not see the approach of the bull, the "picadors" are mounted upon superb steeds full of life and vigour, with sleek coats as shining as those of race-horses. Their riders have no protecting armour for legs and thighs, and only carry, not a lance to check the wild rush of the charging animal, but very short "pikes," the end of which bears the proverbial red flag to attract the attention of the bull. The old screws in Spanish and Mexican bull-fights, are placed in the arena for the sole purpose of being slaughtered, that the audience apparently may see blood.

In Peru, it was a wonderful sight to see those perfectly trained horses, standing immoveable at the side of the "ring." When the large gates closing the entrance to the stables were thrown open, the waiting hush of expectation would suddenly be broken by the rushing entry of an excited bull, anxious to escape from its tormentor's prodding with the pin-pricking goads employed

to arouse its fury without doing it any bodily injury. Dazzled at first by the light, it would look around for some exit, and then attracted by the waving of the picador's red pennons, it would fix its gaze upon one of these maddening sights and charge.

As I daresay is generally known, a bull once it has lowered its horns for a charge, never looks up again until it has reached its objective, or its élan has been spent in a vain effort. Then comes the test of the picador ; should he move away from the spot he is holding until the bull has passed, he is disgraced, and may lose his place in the company ; he must wait up to the last second almost, and then wheel his horse upon its hind legs so that the bull may rush past, just grazing, as it were, the haunch of the steed with the tip of its horn. Should the horse be injured in the slightest degree, it is also a bad mark for the picador.

The distance must be measured to less than an inch for any applause to be won. The charge is watched in breathless excitement, and a fine picture meets the view as the noble-looking horse, thrown back upon its haunches, raises its forelegs in the air and turns gracefully aside.

A comic element is somewhat introduced, and on one occasion I saw a gaily-dressed *señora* brought into the arena and left standing there. The bull looked for a few moments, and then charged. To his great perplexity his horns met with no resistance, but the thing clung to them and could not be shaken off for a while. The figure was of basket work, forming a cage in which had been imprisoned a number of white doves, which, of course flew away as soon as the figure had been tossed and the wicker work broken.

What wonderful nerve and skill these matadors possess ! I have seen one stand with folded arms awaiting the charge of

the bull and then, just as expectation was at its utmost tension, and it looked as if it were impossible for the man to escape from the formidable weapons of the animal, he would vault over its head between them. I have seen the same man sit in a chair facing the bull till the last moment, and then jump aside as the animal, balked of its prey, rushed on with the chair upon its horns.

The aim of the matador, of course, is to kill the bull with the first thrust of the sword, which can only be done by a well-directed blow behind the shoulder-blade, by which the heart is pierced. If it be a deep thrust, the poor animal falls at once upon its knees, at the feet of its victor who has turned to face it, knowing well that the bull has received its death warrant, and can do no more. Then follows the scene of excitement already depicted. Should however the first thrust prove a failure, what a change there is in the mental atmosphere of the spectators! There is noisy excitement enough, but it finds expression only in showers of scornful hisses. More especially is this the case, when, as I once saw in the Plaza of Lima, the bull gallops away round the arena with the sword sticking up in the thick fleshy part of its shoulder.

In this connection I cannot help relating the adventure of a bull and a "bluejacket" which, with all the elements of a tragedy about it, ended in an amusing comedy. Whilst the *Charybdis* was lying off Valparaiso upon her second visit there towards the end of February, 1862, a party of toreadors had come down from Peru, and in spite of a prohibition against bull-fighting, had obtained permission from the Alcalde to give several exhibitions of bull-sports, but on the express condition that no bulls were to be killed. Posters were all over the place, describing the various tricks that were to be played with the fine young bulls brought

from Peru, in the special Plaza which was being constructed at Vina del Mar, the village suburb of Valparaiso away on the northern side of the bay.

By this time I had made the acquaintance of a Chilian family. There was only the husband and wife, and one small daughter. They were very kind to me ; the lady had taken quite a motherly interest in me and called me *Hijo mio* (my son), and her husband used to lend me his horse whenever I wanted to go for a ride. With my experience of the sport in Peru I much wanted to see how far these toreadors from Lima would go in the way of exhibiting their skill ; so having arranged the matter with my friend, the following Sunday afternoon saw me riding out into the country in broad-brimmed "sombbrero" and "poncho," with long large rowelled spurs to my heels—all borrowed from my friend—looking as I thought in my own estimation if not in that of others, quite the Caballero Chileno. Reaching the wooden structure, I paid my dollar and took my seat in a compartment on what was meant to be the grand tier.

On looking round to take stock of my neighbours, what was my astonishment to see two British bluejackets step into the adjacent compartment, already occupied by a stolid-looking old Don. I saw at once from their cap ribbons that these men did not belong to the *Charybdis*, but to the Flagship *Sutlej*, which had arrived at Valparaiso a few days previously. However I naturally took a great interest in their proceedings, and watched them closely, deriving much amusement from doing so. They were both in a happy condition already, and had come provided with the means for continuing so.

They had not been seated very long when one of them produced from the breast of his blue serge frock, a large bottle of "Aguardiente" (a fiery spirit). Drawing the cork, he held



out the bottle to the Don alongside of him, with what was meant to be a polite invitation to drink. "Here, Johnny, drinke . . . mucho bono." It was worth seeing the amusing contrast between the good-humoured expression on the face of the bluejacket, and the horrified one on that of the distinguished *Señor*, as the smell of the vile liquor reached his nostrils. The bluejacket did not mind the rebuff, but said as the old Don drew back: "Well, if you don't like it, Johnny, say so; the more for us." "Bill, here ye are, drink fair," and so they continued to sip alternately as the sports went on.

I must say it all seemed rather tame to me after my Peruvian experiences. Yet there was a good deal in the way in which the toreadors played with the bulls, as they were sent in one after another, to enable the men to show their skill and daring. They took the bull by the tail and twisted him round, and jumped between his horns as he charged them. One of them pinned a rose on the muzzle of a bull, and another threw one of the animals by dexterously pulling its tail aside, as it rushed past him. The bulls got very angry with the baiting they received, and charged right and left, making their tormentors fly behind the barriers for protection. There was a good deal of applause from the spectators whenever a particularly good feat was exhibited, involving agility and strength.

Our two bluejackets, however, did not seem to think there was very much in it, to judge by their funny remarks about the ruddy bulls and the monkified jumpers, and presently I saw one of them suddenly leap into the ring. Pulling his black silk neck handkerchief adrift, he waved it about as he had seen the "Chulos" do with their red cloths, and presently the bull made a charge. Jack jumped nimbly aside and the bull passed. Swiftly it turned, and was after Jack again, but the sailor was

safe behind the barrier when the bull struck it with an angry blow that resounded throughout the enclosure.

The spectators were wild with delight. "Bravo, Marinero! Bravo, Marinero!" was shouted from all parts of the arena. Never had they seen such a fine sight as this contest between a British sailor and a bull. Three times Jack was chased round the ring by the angry animal, always escaping a prod by getting behind a barrier just in time. Then, tired of the game, he got over the barrier and joined his companion. "Bravo, Bill!" said his chum. "Take a pull," and handing over the bottle to Bill, climbed over into the "ring" in which the bull stood watching from the opposite end.

They were alone, as the "Chulos," jealous apparently of the applause bestowed upon the amateur Gringo sailor, had all retired. Bill's chum, whose name I am sorry to say I have forgotten, had gone however further into "the Vineyard of our Lord," as the saying is, and did not stop to think much. What Bill had done, could not he do also? "In coorse he could!" he cried out as Jack called him back with, "Where the h—— are you going to?" It all occurred in a few moments, and this is what I saw.

Advancing in zig-zag steps and squaring up his fists in a fighting attitude, he cried out, "Come on, you ruddy B——, come on!" The bull had lowered his head and the next moment was upon him. High in the air the poor fellow was tossed, and he fell with a dull thud upon the hard ground of the ring, an apparently inert mass.

The sound of the man's body as he struck the ground was so loud that I thought his bones must have been broken, and I was disgusted and enraged to hear the applauding shouts of, "Bravo, Toro! Bravo, Toro!" Not a thought, apparently, was given

by anyone in the crowd to the unfortunate sailor, save by his chum and myself. Bill, without the slightest hesitation, jumped into the arena, and paying no attention to the bull, sat down alongside his friend and lifted his head on to his own shoulder. Taking the bottle from under his serge, he pulled out the cork quickly with his teeth, and with the heartening request, "Here, Bo', take a swig of this!" he poured some of the contents into his chum's mouth. Miraculous as it may appear, the man was neither killed nor seriously injured. He was just dazed a bit, and the liquor revived him. The bull was so amazed apparently at the sight of what was going on before his eyes, that he never attempted to gore, or to trample upon either, but just backed away to the other end of the ring as if to prepare for another charge. But he never moved; he merely stood quietly gazing at Bill, supporting his chum, walked him quietly outside by the entrance.

In justice to the spectators I must say that their voices were hushed at once when they saw what the other sailor was doing to save his friend, and their departure in safety was hailed by loud "Vivas!" and "Bravos!" "Bravo los Marineros Ingleses!"

I had gone outside the moment I saw them leaving the arena. They were standing quietly together, and when I spoke to them, congratulating the one upon his wonderful escape and the other upon his brave action, I found them perfectly collected in thought and quite sober.

The one who had been tossed looked as white as a sheet and was still weak from the great shock he had received. I impressed upon them the wisdom of getting back to their ship as soon as they possibly could, and reporting to their Surgeon all that had happened, so that anything that might be necessary

on account of the shock could be done at once. They say "the gods look after little children and drunken men."

Whilst lying at Valparaiso, taking guard alternately with the *Sutlej* during the remainder of our last visit, I came into collision with the new First Lieutenant, Rivington, who had succeeded the officer with whom I had had a controversy at Singapore and who in turn began to refuse me leave. I gained another victory. He refused me permission to use a boat on Sunday to bring off my Chilian friend, *Señora* Valverde, and her two young nieces from Santiago, who were anxious to see a man-o'-war before they left for home next day. The Captain, to my relief, granted my request, and I brought my party off, the *Señora* with her two nieces, both beautiful young girls in their 'teens. I showed them all over the ship, gave them tea in the gun-room, and then took them back quite delighted with their visit. *Señora* Valverde was very fond of me, and I am not quite sure that she had not conceived the idea of turning me from a heretic into a good Catholic, and getting me married to one of the said nieces, whose father, she told me, was a very rich man.

After I left Chili she corresponded with me for quite a long time, and it was with much grief and horror that I read in one of her letters of the terrible catastrophe in Santiago—the burning of its large Cathedral, in the flames of which perished, so she told me, over 2,000 ladies of the best families in Chili and "the whole country was in a flood of tears." Those two lovely girls were amongst the victims. It was on the occasion of a great Religious Fête, and the Cathedral was densely packed. The decorations, mostly of paper, caught fire, and the panic was such, that the crush and struggle at the doorways prevented any rescues after the first few had got away. They tore each other to pieces in their terror and vain struggles to get away. The men

outside could do nothing to help, as those in the doorway were so jammed together and held fast by the others behind. It was a terrible tragedy, and although so many years have passed since it occurred, it is still spoken of with sorrow.

What we found a great nuisance at Valparaíso were the police regulations in respect to boat-work at night. After sunset no shore-boats were allowed to move about the harbour or anywhere afloat in the bay. This, of course, was to prevent smuggling. Men-o'-war boats were naturally not interfered with, but the last officers' boat left the shore at 9 p.m. This was far too early for officers full of life, and craving for a little excitement ashore, as a set-off to the monotony of the many hours spent on shipboard. We had soon learnt that at certain regular hours the Customs Guard Boat left the quay to make the round of the harbour, and that we could always depend upon a passage by her, *moyennant*, as the French say, a certain fee. So we seldom troubled ourselves about the 9 o'clock boat.

Unfortunately, however, the hours of departure for the Guard Boat were few and far between, and there was often such a long wait after the closing of the "American Bowling Alley" in which we spent much of our time, or the dancing-hall where we sometimes went to watch the "Fandangoes" and the "Samicurca." This last is the national dance of the Chileños, and when danced in Society is most graceful and very pretty to watch. No one, it is said, can dance it properly but a native. As to the other dances, they are noisy and suggestive more than graceful, and not interesting to watch for long.

I don't know the meaning of the word "samicurca," but the dance might well be called "La chasse de Cupidon." There are no partners, but all are seated at the side of the room, and as a lively air is started, generally with harp and guitar or

violin, a lady rises and twirling her handkerchief as she vales and pirouettes rapidly round the room, suddenly allows its end to touch one of the men seated in expectation. Up he jumps, and, dancing away in varying steps, always keeping time to the music, he endeavours by the celerity of his movements to capture the dancing nymph, who has enticed him to follow her. Pursuer and pursued turn and twist with intricate steps until all in a moment her handkerchief touches another of the seated men, who starts in pursuit, the first one with a bow retiring in his favour. Thus the game goes on until at last the lady is caught, or allows herself to become the captive of some favoured swain. Two or three girls may be dancing away in this manner at the same time.

We had, therefore, to fill up the long periods of waiting which occasionally occurred, when in the excitement of a well-contested match at bowls we allowed the hours to slip by, and suddenly discovered that it was midnight, and closing time was at hand. What was to be done? Nothing but hard benches at the Custom House to rest upon as the patrol-boat had already left upon its second round. It was a situation that could not fail to breed trouble, and it did so, for mischief was assuredly hatched in our brains by our enforced idleness.

The streets were always quiet and deserted before midnight, as all good householders had retired to rest, there were no riotous *bons viveurs* marching home, and the only sound to be heard occasionally was the solitary whistle of a "Vigilante," anxious to show that he was properly keeping watch. Valparaiso was a well-ordered city, very well policed. Every few hundred yards was stationed a "Vigilante," armed with a sharp-cutting sword which he did not scruple to make use of upon anyone attempting to evade arrest. Besides this, in each square and other open

spaces was stationed a small number of mounted men of the same corps, standing by their horses if not already mounted, so as to be able to move off at once to any point, as directed by the whistling calls of the police on foot. Anyone making a noise in the streets at a late hour of the night was promptly arrested and carried off to the Police Court, the "Calabooze," as it was called, where there was a large round cage like that of a monkey-house at the Zoo, into which he was thrust with all other sorts of offenders taken up in the night.

Hanging outside many of the shops were sign-boards and "ensigns" indicating more or less the nature of the articles held on sale inside. These had early attracted our attention, and we thought what a lark it would be to carry some of them off. There they hung, like forbidden fruit, looking so enticing in their unprotected positions that we could not resist the temptation to open a campaign against them. We organised ourselves into a Committee of Mischief, to carry out raids upon these shop-signs during those hours of the night, when we were waiting for the boat to take us off to the ship. We provided ourselves with loud-sounding whistles like those of the Vigilantes, and a coil of strong, small cordage. Having marked out the special object of our attack beforehand, a couple of scouts were sent out to look round and let us know when the coast was clear.

All our preparations would be completed, and we would be standing under the sign-board, the leader with the rope neatly coiled up and ready for the throw, when two of our fellows drawn by lot for the occasion, would be sent up the street in opposite directions to whistle away with all their might. This was to draw away all the Vigilantes from the length of the street in which we were operating. With the first sound of the whistle, up and over the swinging board went the rope, and with a one,

two, three, and pull away all together, down it would come with a rattling sound. Covering it up with the cloth we had brought with us for the purpose, away we scampered with it down a side street. It was not long before we heard the rat-tat-tat of the galloping horses, but we generally managed to reach the Custom House in safety—at least, the major portion of us—and with us our trophy, too, which the next morning was handed over to the officer in charge of the stores on board the depôt ship *Nereus*, stationed at Valparaiso.

There at the Custom House we were joined by the whistlers, if lucky enough to escape. They often did so, by dodging down a side street at once when they heard the Vigilantes coming. Running at top speed, they could generally out-distance the foot-police, encumbered as they were with the long sabres they carried like those who were mounted. Sometimes of course the mounted men would be down on them quickly, and once in sight it was a case of immediate surrender, as also when, if running away, one came across a Vigilante on another beat in a different part of the town. Otherwise, swords came into use at once.

It was great fun, as we considered it, and very exciting. But it wasn't pleasant to spend a few hours in the cage until daylight, when a friend came round and release followed on payment by him of a dollar for each misdemeanor. This, whilst we were lying at Valparaiso, had become a sort of daily task for the beef-contractor, as hardly a night passed without either one or two Naval officers being shoved into the Calabooze, as there were other police restrictions besides noisy conduct in the streets to which penalties were attached, one of which was riding through the streets at a canter or gallop.

One of our fellows for doing this got into serious trouble. He was riding rather fast through a crowded street, and a



Vigilante caught hold of his bridle to arrest him, when he foolishly struck him over the head with the stock of his riding whip and galloped off. The man blew his whistle, and our friend almost immediately afterwards found himself surrounded by mounted men, and he was ignominiously led away to the Calabooze. He was one of our Midshipmen, and fortunately for him was in uniform at the time, or the hot-headed youngster might have been badly treated. It wasn't long before the news of the arrest of a British officer reached us, and we went down to the Calabooze to interview him and have some fun at his expense.

And didn't we ! There he was, raging like an old fighting-cock as we chaffed him, and "cluck-clucked," offering imaginary barley, and remarking upon his fine "spurs," and the cock of his eyes. With what dire vengeance did he not threaten us ! It only made us laugh the more to see his impotent rage. At last, however, we thought it better to leave him alone, and see what could be done to help him. One of our fellows went out and brought back with him a bottle of good Aguardiente, and in my very best Spanish I begged the police officer of the guard to join with us in drinking the health of "the bird in the cage." He had been laughing at the fun, and readily accepted. I saw that he liked the liquor and gave him another stiff dose, and we got on so merrily together, that I thought I might venture to say a word for our friend in durance vile. I pointed out his ignorance of the Municipal regulation, and the absence of any intention on his part to offend ; that he was merely riding as accustomed to do in Inghilterra when he was suddenly affronted and arrested publicly for no reason that he could understand. I added further that our friend was sorry for what had taken place, and hinted at the application of a silver plaster for the alleged broken head.

But the blood of the Spanish Hidalgo ran warmly in the veins of Don Alonzo under the influence of the Aguardiente, and he almost felt the outrage of a mere Peon\* laying his hands upon a Caballero of such distinction, as an insult to himself. *Amigo querido mio* (no, my dear friend), there should be no money payment; the man must apologise for what he had done. He was sent for, and did. He had not really been injured, as the officer probably knew. We continued to carry on our little game with success for some time, until the police at last "got wise" as to our proceedings, and gave us no chance to hoodwink them. A couple of Vigilantes were always lurking near the doors of the Bowling Alley, and we found ourselves quietly shepherded down to the Custom House, with a whistle blowing at once, if anyone of us moved out of the straight road leading to it.

Before, however, this occurred, there was quite a curious collection of wooden shop-signs on board the old *Nereus*.

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\*A foot-soldier.

## CHAPTER XII

## PANAMA IN THE 'SIXTIES

WE left Valparaíso on April 14th, 1863, stopping for one day at Islay, the Port of Arequipa, and spending another week at Callao. There was one peculiarity about Callao I have not hitherto mentioned : the visits of the "Callao Painter," which so troubles the minds of First Lieutenants and zealous Mates of the upper-deck. It was impossible to keep the ship as spick and span as a man-o'-war should look, on account of there being something in the atmosphere of the early morn, that takes the gloss off the best zinc white paint, turning it to a dingy yellow. We essayed more than once to restore the erstwhile brightness of the bulwarks and the paint-work of the boats at the davits, only to find the next morning that the material and the labour had been thrown away. So this mysterious element in the atmosphere had been christened by Jack the "Callao Painter."

I had several nice rides with a Peruvian friend to whom I had brought letters of introduction, and paid a visit with him to Lima. Spending the night in that interesting old city, we took a walk on the Alameda in the evening, and I saw graceful feminine figures walking about. I had to take my friend's word that in many cases their faces were as beautiful as their forms, because they were all veiled in mantillas covering their heads, and leaving only a pair of lovely eyes disclosed to view. He told me that many an amatory intrigue was carried on under the protection

of such disguise, and of husbands having been caught out in wayward strayings from their marital vows, by their professions of love to their own wives, imagining them to be other ladies on the look out for adventures.

We reached the Bay of Panama and anchored off the Island of Taboga, some miles away from the great city on May 24th. Here we remained till August 29th, a long spell of over three months without moving.

Shortly after arriving I passed my examinations as far as such could be done away from England, and was temporarily appointed Acting Second Master. I was docketed "Super-numerary" to the *Charybdis*, as another Second Master had been recently appointed to the vessel. Our Captain also, a day or so after, had been superseded at his own request, and was only waiting for his relief to arrive to proceed home. His interest in me had never slackened, and he told me of his intention to recommend me as strongly as he could for an appointment in the Surveying Service, for which he considered me eminently suited, and that he would push the matter when he went to the Admiralty. Whatever he may have done, his good intentions towards me were frustrated by later important events in Japan. I remained on waiting, very contented with my position as Mate of the upper-deck, under a new Chief—Captain Edward Turner—as genial and as friendly as the first under whom I had served.

By this time Rivington had exchanged, and his successor was a very easy-going person, who never troubled me in the least. So I enjoyed full liberty to be out of the ship as much as I liked, as long as I did not neglect my duties during the day, and was always on board to keep the morning watch.

I never was at any place where it rained so much as at Panama. It really rained every day that we were there. Often

enough, however, only one shower fell, and seldom more than two with a wide interval between. But what showers they were ! Small deluges in their way.

Taboga consists of two islands, the one of quite decent size, and the other a small islet called Morro, which had been acquired by the Pacific Mail Company, and was the Headquarters of the concern in those waters. It was joined to the larger island by a narrow ridge of hard sand, fordable at half tide, with less than a foot upon it at low water. There were only offices and workshops upon it for the repair and maintenance of the Company's fleet, with a so-called " gridiron," a lifting platform upon which the vessels were brought up above water for cleaning and re-coating their " bottoms," and the " bungalow " of the Manager. There was always one of the vessels upon it, placed there at the end of her lengthy run up and down the coast to Chilian ports below Valparaiso, and I had become very friendly with the officers. I usually dined with them once or twice a week, and we played mild " vingt-et-un " and sang songs.

When I was leaving, if the water on the ridge was too high for comfortable wading, a couple of the officers would pull me across the channel in their small boat ; but I generally preferred to walk with bare feet and legs, and trousers turned up a bit, if the ebb-tide was still flowing but near its end.

One night, however, I had one of the frights of my life. It was just at the half-ebb, with the water still receding, and although it was a very dark night, I thought I should be all right with the aid of a lantern and able to keep on the top of the ridge. I divested myself of all my lower garments, making them up into a bundle which I slung round my neck, close up to the back of my head. I took a good " bearing," as I thought, and started off.

All went well at first ; I was nearly half-way and the water had not reached much above my knees, when suddenly my legs slipped from under me and I was floundering about over my depth. I had slipped off the ridge into the deep water on the town side and near to the slaughter-house in the vicinity of which the ground-sharks, the terror of the islanders, congregated to feed upon the offal.

My lantern was, of course, rendered useless, so I let it go that I might not be hampered in my swimming, and struck out with a beating heart for the dark line of shore ahead of me. My apprehension was such that I imagined I could hear the swirling of the water under the beating of sharks' fins and tails as they rushed through it, battling with each other in their eagerness for first bite. I even fancied that I could feel the snout of one of them touch my foot as I struck out, circling it round in my stroke. However, thanks to the Providence that has so often saved the sailor-man in a tight corner, I reached the shore in safety.

The reader who has never heard of the sharks at Taboga, will understand my funk when I mention the fact that they are about the largest in the world, rivalling in size and surpassing in voracity those of the West Indies, even the traditional "Port Royal Tom."

So afraid were the boatmen and fishermen of Taboga, that nothing would induce one of them to enter the water after dark even though it might only be to go for a couple of feet in distance from the shore, and not step into a greater depth than one. That might be all that was required to haul one of their boats close enough in-shore for me to step into it, when I have wanted to get off to the ship, without having to take a long walk to reach the boat-house of the beef contractor, who could always

be depended upon for the use of his boat when there was no other to be procured. Yet not one of these men would do such a thing for any reward.

The natives declared that at night the sharks swam about close in shore, and anyone foolish enough to venture into the water would be knocked down by a blow upon his legs from the tail of one of the beasts, and once down would be quickly dragged into the deeper water and devoured. Curiously enough, in the day-time they did not appear to care much about the sharks, and there were expert divers amongst them who, for the reward of a few dollars, would fight a shark under water, armed with a long, sharp, broad-bladed knife, and kill him with a rip of the white belly as the ugly monster turned to open its mouth and seize its prey.

As to the size of the Taboga sharks, I should be afraid to mention their length and width for fear of being taken for a near relative of Baron Munchausen. I will only say that on one occasion one of them had swallowed the huge piece of pork with which the ship's "shark-hook" had been baited and thrown overboard by one of the men. It was a huge fellow, as could be seen by the disturbance of the water as he lashed it with his tail, and rushed about from side to side in fruitless endeavours to get free. It was Sunday, and the First Lieutenant would not allow it to be hauled on board and killed, as the men desired to do. The hook was fast to a length of chain about six feet long, and at the end of the stout rope which formed the fishing-line. It could not bite through this chain, nor could it break the rope, so it remained struggling on until its strength was exhausted, when it became the prey of its voracious companions.

Such had evidently been its fate, as when the rope was hauled on board the next morning there was nothing but the shark's

head upon the hook, too firmly fixed to it to have been torn away. The head was boiled in order to remove the flesh and clean the jaw-bones, which carried five rows of large serrated triangular teeth, and when fully distended could be passed over the shoulders of the biggest man on board.

The population of Taboga was a very mixed lot, varying in colour from white to different shades of yellow-brown and black. The light-complexioned, showing the traces of their Spanish ancestry, lived in decently-built houses of stone, and large slabs of sun-dried clay called "adobes." Their dwellings formed what was known as the "pueblo" (the town), and it contained the few shops in which anything for sale was to be found. There was also an "albergo," a sort of third-class hotel, with a fair-sized billiard-room, kept by an old Spanish lady with her two daughters and a niece.

The girls were young, not bad-looking, and were always ready for a dance when the harpist, who lived in the "pueblo," could be got hold of. This was easily managed when money was forthcoming for the benefit of his fee, and I generally spent two or three evenings a week either with some of my mess-mates or officers of the Mail steamer, dancing away with one or other of the *Señoritas* Pepita, Juanita and Candelaria.

I might add that at Taboga several of us were nearly ambushed on returning late to our ship from a village near, owing to a mild flirtation on the part of two of my companions with *señoritas* whose relatives were exasperated. The adventure might well have had a tragic ending. Still, subsequently, I made my peace with the inhabitants, largely owing to the good influence of an old coloured lady called Mother Seacole.

If there be any still living who were in the Crimean War and saw anything of Balaclava, they will doubtless remember having



met or heard of Mother Seacole. She was a West Indian negress, and had a sutler's store out there during the whole War.

On August 29th, at twenty-four hours' notice, I was carried off from Taboga by H.M.S. *Tartar*. Trouble had broken out in Japan. The battle of Kagoshima had been fought, though we knew it not at the time, but the orders received from the Admiralty showed that we were apparently on the eve of war with the Japanese, and the *Tartar* had been ordered to make her way to Yokohama with the utmost speed. No officer on board knew anything either of China or Japan, and here was I, a navigator who had visited both countries, and was no longer a regular member of the staff of the *Charybdis* but a supplementary one, awaiting the orders of the Admiralty in respect to his disposal.

Captain John Montague Hayes, called for some reason the "Sweet Pea," possibly on account of the testiness of his disposition and the temper he could show at times, was senior to our Captain, and so I received an order to join his ship as soon as he had learnt of my existence and position. I was nothing loth to join, and I have since regarded this unexpected change as another good gift of Providence, as good in its way as the confiscation of my daily tot by the sailors of the mess on board the *Vesuvius*. I had undoubtedly been "burning the candle at both ends," as they say, a little too much, by taking more than was good for me and not getting enough sleep.

I had been over to Panama two or three times to see the old city, and have a look at the walls, which for all their stoutness could not keep Morgan and its buccaneers outside, when they made that wondrous march across the Isthmus, and stormed and sacked Panama.\* The city, at the time I visited it, was in a

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\* Sir Henry Morgan, a celebrated post-Elizabethan buccaneer, attacked Panama with 1,300 men and took and burned the city (1671).

very bad condition socially. There had been a Revolution in which the white population, the decent people of good Spanish descent, had been driven to the wall. The coloured element, the Sambos and "mestizos," half and quarter breeds of negro and Indian blood, with others in whose blood was a mixture of low-class whites, and the "nigger," was very much at the top.

The conglomerate coloured citizens had swamped the elections, and the Governor and Council of their choice had been passing some very absurd and drastic measures at their dictation. All the churches had been closed, as well as all religious houses, and the priests and nuns driven away, and there were none to marry couples or bury the dead, with the rites of the Church, except by stealth. The women of the upper classes kept within doors, and if they ventured at all outside they were so closely veiled with shawls and mantillas as to be unrecognisable from the ordinary "poblanas" (townswomen of the lower orders). Consequently I never saw a pretty face in Panama, in all my walks about the place, reviving my memory of the doughty deeds of the bold adventurers who would have no peace prevail on the "Spanish Main."

It was a great revelation to me, therefore, when, a fortnight or so before I left, I attended a ball at Panama where I met quite a large number of young girls who were amongst the most beautiful women I have ever seen in any part of the world, unmixed with coloured blood. The "ball" was in celebration of a very momentous event—the first appearance of the Spanish Flag, afloat in the waters of the western coast of the American Continent since the War of Liberation.

I never in my life saw such a large collection of pretty women out of England. All the families of good Spanish descent were there, and the ladies who had been so long living in seclusion

had come to proudly display their beauty in the eyes of their distant kinsmen. There must have been some eighty young girls and married women, ranging in age from twelve to twenty. In the tropics young girls, like hot-house flowers, mature early, and at twelve years of age are women, fully grown, and many of them marry before their next birthday. Like hot-house flowers also, their good looks, alas! soon pass away, and at a time of life when those of Northern countries are reigning beauties, and in their most fascinating stage, these children of the sun are withered creatures, shrunken in form, with nothing very attractive about them, but their graceful walk and fine eyes. Such was the conclusion I was unwillingly compelled to form from the contrast between the young women and girls and their elder sisters and mothers who accompanied them. But it was delightful to dance with those pretty young girls, they were so sylph-like in their little shapely feet.

No introductions were necessary. One's uniform was sufficient to win smiling consent with a nod from the chaperon. I had donned my one gold stripe, obtained from the Paymaster's stores, and borrowed a pair of "swabs" from our Second Master, and found it pleasant to be called "Teniente Don Henrique," the name I gave in exchange for theirs, which I asked for, when paying pretty compliments in my most flowery Spanish. I know a little of several languages besides my own, and could turn out a pretty phrase in Japanese, French, Greek, Turkish and Italian, but there is not one of them that in my opinion can compare with Spanish for skirmishing in the "field of love."

I danced so much that when the ball was over, and for want of anything more comfortable to rest upon, I sat huddled up in an arm-chair, dead tired. I fell into a stupor that must have lasted some time. I cannot call it sleep, as all my faculties

seemed so much on the alert. I was, indeed, very wide awake, as it appeared to me, but oh! so horribly treated by Fate, stricken suddenly with blindness, conscious all the time that I was sitting in an arm-chair in the hotel, waiting until it was time for the boat to take me off to the ship, vainly struggling to open my eyes. What a relief it was when finally roused up by one of my mess-mates, I found it was only—I won't call it a dream, but a horrible "nightmare," conjured up by fatigue.

This was my last appearance at any place on the Pacific coast of America. I joined H.M.S. *Tartar* on September 1st, 1863, and within forty-eight hours we left Taboga under steam and sail for Japan.

## CHAPTER XIII

## THE WAR WITH JAPAN

My work on the *Tartar* was to assist the Master in the navigation, relieve the officer of the "Afternoon Watch" for the "ward-room dinner," and keep the "Second Dog Watch" from 6 to 8. I had a very nice set of mess-mates in the gun-room, and I was very comfortable, save for an occasional little tiff with the Captain over the orders I used to give when in charge of the "deck," and had to trim sails, or set or take in the light upper ones, and "stun-sails." He had very peculiar ideas of his own, and had special formulas for such orders as were to be given. He was in the habit of popping up on the bridge when I was carrying on, and he always got very angry when, by way of meeting his remonstrances against the use of the "commands" I gave, he heard me say, "I beg your pardon, sir, but we always did it that way in my last ship." The "last ship" stunt in the end was too much for him, and he wouldn't allow me to keep the last "Dog Watch" any more. It was his favourite hour for prowling around, and his ears could no longer stand my stereotyped replies.

Another peculiarity was his intense dislike of the word "Hulloa." He entertained me one day, when I was on watch on the bridge, with a long dissertation upon the want of discretion and stability in the character of the man who made use of it. I could not understand his reasoning on the matter.

He was satisfied, however, with his own ideas in respect to it, and the use of the word was forbidden in the ship.

We were hurrying on our way to Yokohama with all possible speed, and would have called in nowhere but for the necessity of replenishing our coal supply. We were using our steam power whenever the wind fell light, and we could make no headway under sail.

Our Captain had visions of glory to be won at the point of the "cutlass," and he meant that the men should be prepared to win it. So every evening, after "Quarters," was enacted a scene on the "quarter-deck" which very much amused us in the gun-room, and which we called the "Storming of Yedo." The bluejackets mustered in companies with cutlass and revolvers, and then at the word of command rushed round the capstan, flourishing their weapons, cutting and slashing in the air with their swords, and clicking their empty revolvers. Up the "bulwarks" to the top of the "hammock-nettings" and into the lower rigging, as many as could get there; they remained cheering whilst the marines in support followed with levelled bayonets to the "waterway" at the ship's side beneath them. The Captain would look on admiringly for a few minutes, and then at the bugle-call in answer to his signal, down came the men to fall in for a renewal of the manœuvre.

We reached Honolulu, in the Sandwich Islands, on the morning of October 8th, and after coaling from the *Trident*, a fine frigate commanded by Lord Guildford, left again early in the afternoon of the 10th. Our stay was so short that I could make few visits, but having ascertained at the first house where I called to see a friend, that all the young ladies of the Colony were away at choir practice in the church, I went off at once to meet them, and met with a most warm and friendly welcome.

My appearance was so very unexpected that I am afraid its effect was to bring the practice to an end. I walked back with them and spent a very pleasant evening.

Just as the coaling was over, and the provision casks stowed in the hold, a vessel was seen rounding Diamond Hill, the south-west headland of the island; she was last from Japan and brought us the astonishing news of the battle of Kagoshima, arising out of circumstances which I subsequently ascertained to be due to a very tragic event, which, about a year and a half after I had left Japan, took place on the Tokaido.

A China merchant, of the name of Richardson, who was having a look at Japan before retiring from business, and an English lady, a Mrs. Borrodaile, who was also at Yokohama on a visit, wanted very much to see one of the Feudal Processions, and Mr. Marshall, a prominent member of the Commercial Community, arranged to take them out to Kanagawa for the purpose. So on the next occasion notice was received of the passing of one of the Great Feudal Lords, the three of them rode out from Yokohama together.

Unheeding the warning protest of the police in the guard-house near the entrance to the Causeway, they crossed over to Kanagawa, and, turning to the right, went a short distance along the Tokaido, when they met a large company of Samurai. This was the "advance guard" of the Daimio, who was following just behind in a "norimon."\* The leader of these two-sworded gentlemen, made waving signs for them to go back, instead of doing which, however, they drew up their horses by the side of the road, remaining in their saddles. In doing this they were violating the Laws of Social Etiquette, and offending the honour and dignity of their Lord. In a few minutes the Japanese soldiers had closed with them. Out flashed their swords, and

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\* A box-like travelling chair.

the riders turned their horses to flee. It was too late altogether for poor Richardson. Being the nearest, he was brought down from the saddle with one blow and despatched immediately by another blow. Marshall received a sword cut in the arm, but succeeded in getting away with Mrs. Borrodaile.

Naturally, the Japanese Government was called to account for this outrage. A heavy indemnity was demanded, as well as the death penalty for the leader of the guard, and the other Samurai at whose hands Richardson had met his death. But the Daimio in the procession was the uncle of the Prince of Satsuma, the most powerful Feudal Lord in the whole Empire. The Tycoon was ready enough to pay the "blood money," but he could not get the Prince of Satsuma to give up such faithful members of the clan, such zealous defenders of the honour of its Lord. After much negotiation and diplomatic by-play, the Tycoon's Government confessed its inability to deal with the question of punishment, and suggested that if we wanted anything done in that way, we should do it ourselves.

So in the end the indemnity was accepted, and the Admiral in command of the China Fleet received orders to bombard Kagoshima, the stronghold of the recalcitrant Prince, unless the men demanded were delivered up to him. Admiral Sir A. Kuper proceeded with such ships as he could get together, and, receiving no answer to his ultimatum, opened fire, and a very lively engagement ensued which ended in somewhat like a "drawn" battle, as although the Japanese batteries were all silenced by our fire and much of the town burnt, some of our vessels got knocked about a bit, the *Argus*, a paddle-wheel sloop, losing her main-mast.

There were many casualties also on our side, amongst the killed being the Captain of the Flagship, Captain Joscelyn, whose



head was carried off by a round shot which just missed the Admiral who was standing talking to him on the bridge of the frigate *Euryalus*, his Flagship. In the end the Admiral had to retire, without obtaining possession of the men he had demanded.

The excitement on board can be imagined ; within two hours our ship had been washed down, fire lighted, and steam raised, and we were passing out of the harbour to get well clear of the shore and make sail. Though very pleased to be going away on " active service," we were most of us, at all events in the gun-room, leaving with a sad heart at the thought that we should never see Honolulu again. We reached Yokohama on the afternoon of December 17th, having been a little more than two and a half months on the voyage.

Three times during my career in the Royal Navy have I been to Japan, my ship always receiving a stormy welcome. It was so with the *Charybdis*, and it was the same with the *Tartar*, and also when I returned in another vessel from China to spend a last few months in Japan. We sighted land in very thick weather which rendered it impossible to identify any landmarks, and it was blowing very hard, so we had to " lie to " for some hours, knocking about in a nasty sea. This was on December 16th. The next morning, though blowing hard, the sky was clearer, and I was able to identify Vries Island, off the entrance to the Uraga Channel, leading into the Gulf of Yedo.

We anchored in accordance with the Admiral's signals, for here we found Sir Augustus Kuper, with quite a large Fleet at anchor off Yokohama. In addition to the flag of the Commander-in-Chief, at the mast-head of the frigate *Euryalus* were thirteen pennants flying over various other ships of war, two large corvettes, the *Pearl* and *Barossa*, three sloops, the *Perseus*, *Encounter* and *Racehorse*, one paddle-wheel sloop, the *Argus*,

two dispatch gun-vessels, the *Cormorant* and *Osprey*, four gun-boats, the *Hesper*, *Havoc*, *Bouncer* and *Kestrel*, and the Admiral's tender, the P.W. *Coromandel*. Most of the larger vessels had been in the action off Kagoshima, and several had sustained damage, for they were, whilst fighting, within pretty close range of the Japanese batteries, which, to judge by those I had seen at Yedo, were well constructed of stone, on the Vauban system, with a moat and grass-covered glacis.

I had left Yokohama in a very peaceful condition, trade flourishing, and all the foreign residents happy and contented. I returned to find the greatest excitement prevailing, and the day after our arrival our small-arms men and marines were landed with similar contingents from all the other ships of war, large or small, to form the huge battalion of over 1,000 men which once or twice a week paraded round the town and across the Causeway to Kanagawa, and sometimes up the valley for a considerable distance, as a demonstration of our power to fight ashore as well as afloat.

It was whispered about that an attack might be expected upon the Settlement at any moment, and the temper of the Japanese was shown on that occasion by the opening of fire from one of their forts at Kanagawa. It was with blank cartridge, it is true, but none the less it was a very defiant answer to our warlike action.

Bluejackets had not been taught to march in those days as they have since learnt to do, and the compact "Naval Brigade" drawn up in companies on the "Bund" or shore-wall road starting in due order, became a very straggling column long before it had reached the turning-point of its promenade. I am afraid that the spectacle of Jack slouching along the dusty road gave rise to a little amusing criticism, and I have, as I write, before my eyes,

the caricature published locally, drawn by Wirgman. It depicted a stout naval officer flourishing a huge sword, sitting upon the back of a diminutive steed, preceded by a band with a small drummer staggering under the weight of the huge drum he is beating; he is leading a "tag-rag and bobtail" of jolly Jack-tars, all moving on, apparently, to the order "Go as you please," whilst a trim little "mousmie" stands at the wayside watching in amazement the passing show, exclaiming with uplifted hands, "Narodah!" (how wonderful!).

But if Jack couldn't keep step in those days he could get over the ground quick enough when wanted, as the bluejackets showed, when some months afterwards, they were landed to storm the batteries at Shimonoseki, and spike their guns. It was a gallant action, very successfully carried out, and for which a Victoria Cross was awarded to the Midshipman who carried the Colours and was the first to come under the fire of the enemy.

These naval demonstrations were not carried on very long after we got to Yokohama, as troops soon began to arrive, and within a few months we had quite a respectable garrison. We had been lying just a week in the port when a very welcome change came my way. I was appointed as the Second Master in charge of the gun-boat *Kestrel*. She was a 40-h.p. screw gun-boat, one of several built during the Russian War and subsequently sent to China for service up the rivers, and particularly for the suppression of piracy.

Her complement of officers and men was very small—only two commissioned Executives, the Captain, a Lieutenant of the name of Dunlop, popularly called Jock, and myself, with a gunner to do quarter-deck duty as well. There were also three engineer officers and some fifty men. There was neither a Paymaster nor a Surgeon, the duties of the first-mentioned being

added to mine as Navigator and Commanding Officer, and in a way those of the second also, as I found myself placed in charge of a medicine-chest with a book of instructions. Of course it was understood that I should never be expected to deal with anything very serious, since a vessel as small as the *Kestrel* was always attached to some larger one which had one or more surgeons on board, so that medical assistance was always within hail.

I felt very proud when I went on board and took charge of all the stores, and commenced my new duties. The Captain was a very popular man in the Fleet, honorary member of several messes, and kept none of his own. He was seldom on board in harbour after 10.30, and only came back to sleep, so we suited each other very well and got on capitally together, though there was little intercourse between us except on duty matters.

It was on November 25th, 1863, that I joined the *Kestrel*, and I remained on board of her until she was paid off towards the end of 1865, and sold to the Japanese. I was, in fact, the last British officer to serve on board, as the Captain had left the ship some days before, and it was my hands which hauled down the pennant when I handed her over to her new owners.

Although small in size, she carried a big gun amidships—a very big one for those days—and I was very proud of her. She had a good record, being one of the ships which attacked the Taku forts in the China War after the Indian Mutiny. Sunk by the fire of the forts, the officers and crew being taken off by her consorts, she was naturally given up for lost, but to the astonishment of everyone she subsequently came floating down the river with her hull submerged, yet free of the channel bed. She was very low between decks, but I had plenty of space in my cabin, both as regards length and width, though I could not,

it is true, stand upright in spite of my comparatively short stature, and when I wanted to do so I had to put my head up through my skylight !

It is an old saying that wherever Englishmen settle in foreign parts in any great number there are two things they set out to do as soon as it is possible to start work. These are, to build a church and make a race-course. I am not quite sure as to which of the two is taken in hand the first, but I do know that I found a race-course in course of construction at Yokohama when I got back from the Pacific, and I don't remember a church ! There was a missionary there, I know, an American, a very earnest man who was doing his best to combat the evil influence on the poor sailors of the many grog-shops ashore which had been started by Chinamen and low-class foreigners. There were none of these pitfalls for the sailorman when I left Japan after my first visit, but a whole row of wooden shanty drinking-saloons had sprung up like mushrooms with the advent of the ships of war and the troops.

Poor fellow ! It was a hard task he had taken in hand, though I was told by our gunner, one of his great supporters in the good work, that he had met with much success. It brought him, however, under the lash of ridicule, as he could not refrain from referring with pride to it in the report he sent home to his Committee.

This report found its way back to Yokohama, and in it, unfortunately for our poor missionary friend, was the concluding sentence : " In this way, and in this manner, the *Spirit* is manifesting its wondrous work." It formed the peg for another Wirgman caricature. The grog-shop with the sleek bar-tender presiding over his many bottles marked gin, cognac, and whisky, etc., and a crowd of riotous sailors fighting and kicking at each

other. At the doorway is seen the missionary, talking to a friend at his side, as he points with his finger to the scene within, saying to him the last sentence of his report, as given above.

The race-course was completed early in the following year, and by this time I was the possessor of a very nice-looking grey pony. It had quite a number of good points in the judgment of some of my young naval friends, who professed to a sound knowledge of horse-flesh. A race-meeting was arranged at an early date, and at the solicitation of friends I entered the pony for both the "Maiden Stakes," a flat race, and the "Great Welter," a cross-country one, with jumps and drops—not that I had any intention of riding it myself. A jockey had been found in a midshipman of the *Euryalus*, of the name of Fawkes, a distinguished Admiral on the retired list at the present time, and a K.C.B. He had undertaken to train and ride the pony, and I had provided the cap and jacket, pink and silver stripes, and all was going on well until within a few days of the meeting, my jockey had his leave stopped and the training came to an end.

A club had been started some months previously, and was in a very flourishing condition, with all the patronage of the officers to help the residents to carry it on. There was naturally much excitement over the prospect of the first race-meeting in Japan, and there had been much lively betting over the entries. Books were made up, and when I essayed to withdraw the entry of my pony, on the very eve as it were of the race, I found that the idea was so badly received, and I should become so unpopular if I did so, that I foolishly gave it up, and as I could not get hold of another jockey, I donned the pink and silver myself.

The racecourse was on the "Bluff," on the other side of the creek surrounding the Settlement. It was by no means a circular

course, but pear-shaped, and was situated on the off-slope of the Bluff, towards the Omoko Valley, with the narrowest part of the course below the summit of the Bluff. The whole of the foreign population was there, with an enormous crowd of Japanese, brought by their curiosity to witness the riding of the "Tojins."

The Maiden Stakes was first on the list, and I drew the inside number. I had never ridden a race before in my life, and my pony had received little or no training, and it most certainly knew nothing more than I did as to what should be done when the flag went down for the start. We started from below, racing up the slope of the wider circle, and I was really not doing so badly as I had passed a couple of ponies on the way up, when just ahead of me one suddenly tripped and fell. We were so close that my heart went into my mouth, since I thought that I would assuredly come down upon the rider and probably kill him, but my pony swerved to the right, and on I went.

I was gaining upon the others ahead, and might possibly have made a decent finish had not Fate been against me. It was a very awkward approach for the run home. The bend was so narrow that if the horse was not turned quick enough he shot off the course and was out of the race. If on the other hand he was turned too quickly, he was thrown over. A couple of horses were put out of the race owing to this difficulty of steering between this Charybdis and Scylla, and only three were left to finish besides myself. Going round, my pony had again jumped aside to avoid a fallen comrade, and I lost a stirrup and of course had no chance whatever of getting a place.

By this time the others had passed the winning-post, and in their excitement the spectators, forgetting all about the other horses coming up the hill, broke over the rails and mobbed the course. I had essayed in vain to pull up my steed, but he

had a hard mouth, and nothing but a Mexican bit could have stopped him. On he rushed, and all my shouting to stand clear was in vain. The spectators were all shouting and cheering, and as I came on, cannoning into them right and left, loud was the cursing at me and my d——d horse. It was enough for me. No more racing ! I slunk away and got my colours off as quickly as I could, and I may say there was no shouting for the horse when the entries for the Great Welter were summoned to appear. But although I made such a poor figure at this race-meeting, I can always declare that I rode in the very first race at the very first race-meeting which ever took place in Japan.

I have spoken of the arrival of troops. Within a few months we had in camp on the Bluff and other rising-ground in the neighbourhood, a battalion of the 20th Regiment of Infantry, and a Battalion of Marines which arrived from England in the line of battleship, *Conqueror*, after a very momentous voyage through the China Sea, where she nearly foundered in a terrific typhoon. She was said to have passed right through its centre, and was on her beam-ends for many hours. But she was well battened down, and was a staunch and sound wooden vessel and weathered the storm. No smaller vessel could have survived it, and a vessel of steel or iron would have gone to the bottom at once when thrown on her beam-ends.

A battery of field artillery had also arrived from China, and shortly after the Marines came a battalion of Baluchis. Before, however, this great gathering of fighting men had taken place, and whilst there was still some apprehension in respect to possible hostile Japanese action, a very amusing event had taken place.

An organised plan existed for the rescue of the British Colony. At a given signal from the shore, the noise of rockets exploding



in the air and the sight of their flaming fragments, all Britishers were to flock down to the "Hatoba" (the Marine Parade), to be taken off to the men-of-war, whose boats would be there to receive them. The duty of the little *Kestrel* in such an event was to proceed towards Kanagawa to destroy the bridge and cover the causeway with our fire to prevent the advance of Japanese from that direction, and, if necessary, pass through the canal to the back of the settlement, which our small draught would allow us to do. In view of such a contingency arising we were usually kept under "banked fire," and occasionally with steam up, ready for an early start.

Imagine then the scene when one night, not far off twelve o'clock, up went several rockets. The drums beat to quarters, the rattle of blocks was heard as the ropes flew through them in the hasty lowering of the boats, with the whistling of the "bo'sun's mates" and bugle-calls. Then came the question from the flagship, "From what quarter were those rockets sent up?" and an answer came, pointing out a large merchant steamer lying at anchor.

It was a vessel called the *Carthage*, belonging to Jardine, Matthieson & Co. She was on a round trip from Hong Kong with Mr. Charlton Whittall on board, a first cousin of the Head of the House in China. He had been fêted at every port they touched at, for the Jardine, Matthieson Co. was pre-eminent in those days in China and Japan, and naturally the agent of the powerful company at Yokohama was not going to do less in honour of their visitor than those elsewhere had done. So here also great attention had been shown to Mr. Whittall, and the night before he was leaving, he was holding high festival on board the *Carthage* in return for the hospitality he had received, and eventually, when, after a good dinner, with champagne flowing and subsequent

sundry "B. and S.'s," as was the fashion in those days, his guests were leaving, he ordered rockets to be sent up in their honour.

A boat was sent off at once from the flag ship with a Lieutenant to make further enquiries, and as she got alongside a voice from the gangway issued a joyous welcome in answer to the query, "What is the matter?"

"It's all right, old chap, come up and have a drink; only seeing some friends off."

Up the side went the Lieutenant, followed by the Coxswain and a couple of "stout bluejackets," and in a few minutes down the ladder came the Captain of the ship, with the host and the rest of the convivial party still on board. Into the waiting cutter they went, prisoners, to be carried off to the *Euryalus*, to await arraignment before the Admiral on her quarter-deck. They were kept a long time toeing the line under the guard, and then, after a jolly good wiggling from the Admiral, were sent back to the *Carthage*.

It had been very exciting for a short time, but the hollow nature of the alarm having been soon discovered it was not long before all the boats had been recalled, and nervous residents sent back to their roosts. It was looked upon as a good joke by many both ashore and afloat, and I fancy the Admiral himself was not seriously displeased, as the little outburst of jollity had served a useful purpose after all. The affair could be regarded as a "night manoeuvre" to test the readiness of the men, and the value of the organisation for the rescue of the Colony, in case of any attack in the hours of darkness. The *Carthage* started the next day for Hong Kong, and the hero of the "lark," poor fellow, died not very long after his return from his pleasure-trip to Japan. How very far from my thoughts was all idea of what Fate had in store for me as I laughed with others at the

Club the next day talking over the matter. Had he but lived some few years longer, as might well have been the case, he would have been my father-in-law, as I was destined to meet, woo, and marry one of his daughters in Constantinople.

It was a very pleasant life I led in those days. I was master of my own time to a great extent. The men were a very decent lot and never gave trouble, and the gunner a serious-minded man who only wanted to go ashore occasionally on a week-day to attend some extra prayer-meeting in the missionary conventicle. The little vessel occupied a berth just off a landing-place at the "Hatoba," within easy hail, and I could get on board or come ashore in two or three minutes. Early in 1864 I had made friends with a very good fellow, the accountant of a bank, and at his invitation I took up quarters in his bungalow, and messed with him as long as we were in harbour. It was so much nicer for me to have someone to look at and chat with over the table, than to sit down to solitary meals in my cabin, and the arrangement worked very well for both of us. I had a share of the stables, and it was jolly to get up in the early morning, and after a ride of several miles, get a sluicing down with cold water, and then start in with a good appetite for breakfast before going on board.

My position as the second in command of a gun-boat, with a Captain like Jock Dunlop, was a very pleasant one. Spending most of my time on shore as I did with a certain amount of shooting, in which I did not shine and which we carried out in opposition to the Japanese police, who did not at that time recognise such pursuit of game, I was able to see much of Japanese life, and to pick up a good deal of the ordinary lingo. Soon after I had joined with my friend the bank accountant in Japanese house-keeping, a third member came to share the *ménage* at my

solicitation. This was my friend Phil Dowson, the Viking, as I always called him. He was the young fellow whose acquaintance I had made at Esquimalt, in Vancouver Island, when he had arrived there on his way to the gold diggings in the Cariboo mountains. I had heard nothing whatever of him from the day we parted, and then he suddenly turned up one day in Yokohama, and we met in the Club. We had a long yarn together, and I learnt all that had happened to him and his party.

They reached the mining district with their outfit all right, pegged out contiguous claims, and worked hard for about a couple of months or so without any success beyond getting out some two or three dollars' worth of gold. By this time the gold fever with him had worked itself out. He had had quite enough of the digging and washing, and was anxious to quit and try another road to fortune. They had also got well down towards the end of their provisions, so after a little palaver together, it was agreed to cancel partnership and each strike out for himself. The remaining grub was divided, and Dowson, taking his share of it, left them to walk the 600 miles lying between the diggings and the landing-place on the Vancouver River, from which the steamers started. After meeting the utmost difficulties and not of little privation he reached Victoria on Vancouver Island. On his way down he even, for his food, made a chimney for the owner of a ranch who did not know how to do it himself. At Victoria he tried hard to get some employment which would enable him to live quietly and put something by, but all the work he could get hold of was rail-splitting for farm fencing at a dollar a day and his grub. He was no "sundowner," and wouldn't be a "remittance man." He had come away to make his fortune, and he didn't see his chance of doing so in any part of the New World, so he made up his mind, instead of writing to his widowed

mother for money, to try the Old one again, but in its Far Eastern portion. He had heard that there was a sailing-ship lying at Esquimalt, waiting for hands to complete her crew before she sailed for China. Off he went on board, and after a short interview with her Captain, was sent forward to the fo'c'sle, to work his passage for his food during the voyage, but no pay. He was landed at Shanghai without a cent in his pocket. He couldn't pay for a night's lodging even in a sailor's doss-house, and it was as well for him that he didn't try to obtain admittance into one. Not knowing what else to do, as it was so late in the afternoon, he slept that first night in a Chinese cemetery. The very next morning, wandering about the European quarter, he "struck ile," as the Yankees say. He met an old schoolfellow, settled in Shanghai as an architect and builder. He took him home with him to tiffin, rigged him out properly, and then, having heard all his story, arranged that he should come as an employé into his office and learn the business. It proved such an admirable bargain for both that Dowson had been sent up to Yokohama to establish a branch of the business as a junior partner. He was very energetic. Nothing came amiss to him, and when I left Japan towards the end of 1876, he was manager of a flourishing business in the building line, to which he had added that of "engineering repairs." He had just then successfully dealt with the propeller of an American man-o'-war, going down in a diving-dress himself, as there was no one else to do it, the ship's diver having had to leave from continued bad health. He made a nice little fortune in a few years, and retired in 1893 to settle down in England, and he paid me a visit in Constantinople on the way.

How often one hears the remark made: "How small the world is!" The rancher of the Cariboo track, mentioned above, was the brother-in-law of my wife's sister. He was a very hard

nut, the eldest son of a high official in the Civil Service, a bit of a martinet in his household, as far as his sons were concerned. This son could not brook the parental despotism in respect to smoking and evenings spent from home, and so bolted off on his own to America, since he was a youngster of much pluck and courage. He went to California, soon got over his "tender-foot" experiences, and could hold his own with any Western bully. He remained a loyal Britisher to the end, and there is a story told of him, that on one occasion he would sing "God Save the Queen" in a crowd of roughs, in spite of the objections of a lot of Irish Yankees amongst them, who swore to "do for him" unless he shut up. He continued his loyal song, so they hauled him away and buried him in the sand up to his neck, daring him to go on further with it, and swearing that if he did they would cover him up entirely and leave him. He wouldn't be silenced however, and then the real Yankees, in admiration of his pluck, insisted upon his being dug out and released. A nephew of this staunch son of Britain was a shining light in the Navy until the "Geddes axe" laid him low—a jolly fellow, short and stout, who could sing a good song, he was very popular with both officers and men, although a strict disciplinarian, as well as being a smart and gallant wearer of the blue and gold sleeve-stripes. I may even quote another instance of the truth of the old saying. One evening an old friend, Captain James, was at a Japan Society dinner, and seated alongside of him was a member who, in the course of a little friendly chat, asked him if he had ever been to Constantinople. Receiving an affirmative reply, there came another question. Had he ever met there an officer in the Turkish service called Woods Bey? "Yes," was the reply, "and his wife, at the present moment, is in London." The questioner was my old friend Dowson, just

back from America. He had come for a long spell in the old country, and we met in London the following year. It was some twenty years and more since I had seen him last. He was still the same tall, stalwart, blue-eyed Viking fellow, though his nose had been knocked aside a bit in a struggle with a vicious broncho. He had followed many pursuits with varying fortune, losing and making money, and had finally settled down to horse-breeding, and owned a large ranch in Montana. He had got knocked about a good deal ; most of the bones in his body had been broken at one time or another, as, when he first " started in " as a horse-rancher, he had done much of the work of breaking in the colts.

## CHAPTER XIV

## THE STORY OF A TRAGEDY

MY early morning rides, with one or more companions, were always very pleasant. A favourite riding excursion was to the so-called Daibutz, a gigantic bronze statue of Buddha, standing by itself in a grove of trees, at Kamakura, about 15 or 20 miles from Yokohama. We passed over the intervening hills and enjoyed nice gallops along the sandy beaches of Omoko and other fishing-villages, and the long stretching shore of Mississippi Bay, so called after an American war-ship, part of the squadron which had visited Japan and broken the bonds holding her aloof from the rest of the world. Then reaching Kanazawa, a small town near the outlet of a little river forming the western boundary of Mississippi Bay, we crossed a mountain range, and there was Kamakura near at hand, standing in a plain of considerable width, extending to the seashore, some five or six miles away.

Kamakura, once a great city, is now but a small village. It was, and no doubt still is, however, held in great reverence by the Japanese. To them all around was sacred ground, for it is the resting-place of great warriors, and in close proximity to the principal tea-house were the shrines of ancient deities which attract many pilgrims. There was also a large temple of great renown, a curious feature of which were the two ponies kept slung from the roof of the temple by stout soft ropes, fastened to broad strong girths. They were "Albinos," the hair of





THE BUDDHA AT KAMAKURA.  
(THIS GREAT BRONZE STATUE IS STYLED, POPULARLY, THE "DARBUTZ.")



their coats and manes being whitish-yellow, and their eyes pink. From the Temple Gates a wide avenue runs down to the sea, a fine, well-kept roadway, bordered with large umbrageous trees on either side. This, according to the Japanese, is the highway of the gods, who come up from the sea at intervals to visit their shrines, and the ponies mentioned above were kept for their service. Numerous little plates of dried leaves and boiled rice were always standing near their roped-off enclosure, so that pilgrims could obtain merit by purchasing one or more and feeding the little animals with their contents. In the grounds was a large black stone, railed off in a small pen by itself, an object of great veneration, since no pilgrim who passed by it failed to do it reverence. It was, I should say, a large aerolite, and it owed its sacred character to the impression upon it, which connected it with the ancient cult mentioned in an earlier part of these reminiscences. This roadway was in a way sacred, but no one was ever cautioned to avoid it and use the pathways, and naturally enough visitors on horseback rode along it as far as the smaller road, which, turning off abruptly to the right, led to the Buddha. It was, however, done once too often, and a terrible tragedy at last took place.

The Buddha\* of Kamakura is a magnificent specimen of bronze casting. It is of great height, cast in pieces which are so well fitted together that it looks one perfect whole. The sacred personage is seated, cross-legged as usual, with hands meeting upon the lap, in an attitude of holy meditation. The serenity of mind, love, and benevolence expressed in the features of the statue are wonderful. No one can gaze upon that face without thinking of the Christ-like virtues possessed by that

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\* In the recent earthquake the tidal wave swept up the avenue to the very foot of the statue, where it stopped.

saintly predecessor of our Saviour, so well called the Light of Asia. The tragedy, although it took place in this sacred highway, was not at all the outcome of religious fanaticism. In fact, one of the things about the Japanese which struck me most was the total absence of religious fanaticism amongst them. It was due entirely to political fanaticism and the strong patriotism which burnt within the breast of a Samurai of rank, an officer of one of the Daimios. Without doubt he deserved to be remembered, not only in Japanese history, but in the annals of all who have died to serve their country, for the brave manner in which he paid the death penalty for his crime. As the French say, "*Peu s'en fallait*," for me and two companions to have been the victims of the tragedy instead of those who were.

We had ridden back from one of the several visits I subsequently paid to the Buddha after my first one. As usual we rode up the middle of the avenue, and slept that night in the tea-house, it being rather late in the evening. It was the very night before the sad event took place, and had we started from Kamakura later than we did, or taken the same route for our return as that by which we had come, we should undoubtedly have fallen into the hand of the assassins, by whom two officers of the 20th Regiment were killed an hour or so after we had left.

We were going back by the Tokaido and met these two officers, Major Baldwin and Lieutenant Bird, stopped for a little chat together, and then parted, little thinking that we should never meet again. They rode on to their death, and we continued on our way to Yokohama. The leading Samurai, the author of the tragedy, with two companions he had induced to join him, reached the temple not long after we had left the tea-house. They had come by the usual road from Yokohama, whilst we, desiring to pass through country we had not yet seen, were

returning by the Tokaido, the great highway, as no processions were passing at the time. Hence it was that we escaped their clutches.

Knowing that all foreign visitors to Kamakura, after seeing the great Temple, proceeded down the avenue, the Samurai placed themselves behind the big trees near the junction with it of the Buddha road. It was a lonely spot, far enough away from the village for their movements to escape observation. On came the two officers, utterly unsuspecting of any danger. As they were abreast of the trees where the Samurai had been lying in wait, out rushed the latter with their two-handed long swords, and fell upon the poor fellows, cutting them both down instantly. Poor Baldwin's body was almost severed by the first blow he received. The sword had entered the shoulder on one side and penetrated to the ribs on the other, and he must have died instantaneously. It was the leader of the group who delivered this blow. His companions, much younger men, had bungled more over their savage work, and the body of the other poor victim was found much hacked about.

Little did we expect to receive such news as we did on our arrival that afternoon at Yokohama. A peasant from Kamakura had just come in to say that two "tojins" (foreigners) had been cut down by "ronins" (outlaws) as they were riding towards the Buddha, and speculation was rife as to whom they could be. It was our sad task to supply their names, as there could be no doubt they were the two officers we had met and parted with so pleasantly. The greatest excitement prevailed throughout the whole settlement. The men of the 20th were furious, and had to be confined to camp, with guards from the other Corps over them. They had wanted to march out *en masse* and go off and destroy the whole place. A namesake of mine, the

officer in command of the small force of artillery, was dispatched with ammunition wagons and an ample escort of his men to convey the bodies of the murdered officers into Yokohama. He was also ordered to bring back with him any Japanese witnesses who could be found to testify to the attack, and its result, the Legation interpreter being sent with him to assist in the investigation.

The Japanese authorities bestirred themselves in the matter, and before very long the two younger assassins were found and arrested. Their trial and condemnation was a speedy affair. They were recognised by the witnesses who had been brought away and detained at the Legation, pending the result of the proceedings taken to obtain the punishment of the assassins, and were sentenced to death by being beheaded in public. They were young men, and therefore perhaps did not make any great display of courage when meeting death at the hands of the executioner. In fact, they both made a very sorry appearance, looking as if they had either been stupefied by the administration of some drug, or had suffered severely in mind and body in the endeavours made to obtain from them information which would lead to the capture of the principal offender, who was still at large. Their heads were cut off and exposed on spikes for several days, at a point on the highway leading to Yedo, with a placard on them announcing the crime and punishment.

Weeks passed, and over a couple of months elapsed before anything more was heard of the affair. Always there came the same answer to the Legation enquiries: "Not yet been caught." Then at last came an official communication from the Governor of Kanagawa—the chief "ronin" had been caught, tried, and condemned to death. He was in the prison at Kanagawa, and his sentence would be publicly announced to him the next day,

in the court-room of the Governor, at an hour corresponding, at the time, to half-past one. His punishment was to be his ignominious parade on the back of a pack-horse through the principal streets of Kanagawa, preceded by a large paper banner bearing a description of the hideous crime he had committed in murdering the foreign officers, and setting forth the punishment decree of the judges. In his demand for redress, Sir Rutherford Alcock had stipulated that the execution of the assassins should take place in public, and when that of the leader, the instigator of the attack, was to be carried out, it was to be done in the presence of the soldiers and sailors of the Garrison and Fleet. I was on friendly terms with the Legation interpreter, and meeting him by chance early in the morning I learnt from him that he was going out to the prison to witness the delivery of the sentence, taking with him one of the witnesses able to identify the prisoner, so as to ensure against any attempt at substitution. He told me the hour he was starting, and gave his consent to my joining him on the way.

When we arrived, the only two foreigners present, the court-room was crowded. The judges were seated upon a raised platform with the usual thick cushioned matting. There was a small empty space in front where we went and placed ourselves, and standing behind us was a guard of soldiers fronting the Japanese public who had come to look on at the proceedings.

We had scarcely done so when the prisoner was brought in, a fine-looking, tall fellow with pleasant features. He was trussed like a fowl for roasting, with his arms behind his back and his elbows lashed tightly together. With a police guard on either side of him he stood in front of the judges, within a few paces of us. Catching sight of the witness by our side, he scowled at him, contemptuously, for a moment, and then raised his head

defiantly to hear the sentence of his judges. Gravely it was pronounced by the presiding official, and he heard it read with the greatest calmness. Having lowered his head in courteous acknowledgment, he lifted it again, and gazing upwards sang a few words of what I thought for the moment might be his own death-song. My friend, however, told me that it was a prayer for the welfare of his Prince. Having finished his invocation, he bowed again and turned to his guards. He was marched out to where a pack-horse stood with a number of soldiers round it. He was lifted on to the saddle and securely fastened with ropes, and the procession marched off, preceded by a coolie carrying the paper banner with its inscription in large Japanese characters. My friend and I followed it for some time, passing through several streets, noting as we did so the demeanour of the people. The procession apparently caused little or no attention. There was no excitement whatever, although the prisoner from his high perch on the pack-horse was continually cursing the foreigners, denouncing the evils they had brought with them into the country, and calling upon his people to rise up in their wrath and drive them out. The shopkeeper looked up for a moment, then turned again to his wares. The "*mousmie*," just back from the public bath, seated, mirror in hand, re-tinting her lips and cheeks, glanced aside for a second to see what all the shouting was about, and resumed her congenial task at once when she had seen the approach of the prisoner and his guards. As for the passers-by, they just gave one look and moved on without stopping. Occasionally, at a courteous request on the part of the prisoner, the cortège would stop at a tea-house, and a cup of tea, or "*saki*" (Japanese wine), was held up to him to drink, in accordance with the desire he may have expressed.

It was a very hot day, and somewhat tired with our long



promenade we turned aside and walked up to the execution ground. The place selected for this occasion was on the top of a piece of rising ground some height above the town. It was a platform of moderate size, covered with short grass, and at the back of it stood a belt of tall pine-trees of considerable depth. It was closed on each side with wood fencing, but left open in front. As we reached it we saw the executioner and his assistant standing by a hole in the ground, near which stood a bucket of water and a mat. Away to the left, squatting upon the trunks of a couple of recently felled trees, were a number of two-sworded gentry, smoking their little short diminutive-bowled pipes. There was also a tree-trunk away on the opposite side. The "yako-nins" (officials) responded courteously enough to our greetings, and then, my curiosity excited, I approached the chief executioner and asked him to show me the sword he was holding in his hand. This he did readily enough. It was a simple, plain-looking weapon, like all Japanese swords, very thick at the back, with a cutting-edge of razor-like sharpness. He showed me, with a grin, how it would be used. The hilt was of plain unlacquered wood, with no ornamentation whatever about it.

In about half-an-hour, or so, the prisoner arrived. He was kept still seated on the pack-horse, waiting for the final act of his punishment. As the night closed in, he began grumbling at the delay, and asked when they were going to finish him off. We ourselves were wondering at its cause, but the "yakonin" guards could only reply to our questioning that further proceedings must await the orders of the Governor of Kanagawa. We waited on and still there was no sign of any movement taking place below us, and the prisoner, grown weary of his cramped position, requested to be taken down. This was done, and he was seated upon the trunk nearest to us. What a scene it was,

as I looked around ! Shall I ever forget it ? I have often thought what a striking picture it would have made, had there been but an artist at hand to paint it. As the sun went down, the air got very chilly, and the darkness increased, for there was no moon. Faggots of wood had been brought, with larger pieces, and piled up into bonfires. These when lighted, with the belt of trees immediately behind to serve as a screen, threw into high relief all its features, on the one side the group of "yakonins," smoking their little pipes in various attitudes ; on the other, I, with my friend, alongside the prisoner, listening to his tale, surrounded by the police guards, who had accompanied him in his promenade. They were all squatting upon the ground, and in the centre, between the two groups of officials, were still standing the executioners, with the bucket by their side, and the "Sword of Justice" leaning against it.

We had asked for permission to supply him with a pipe and tobacco, which we borrowed from one of his guards. He was pleased with the attention, and it was probably why he deigned to explain to us the reason for his murderous action. He had seen with much sorrow the great changes that were taking place with the advent of the Western strangers, and the evils arising therefrom. The export of produce was causing a rise in the price of necessities, especially of rice, the principal food of the people, which in time would become scarce and lead to famine. He spoke of the facility afforded the Tycoon to provide his soldiers with modern European weapons, through the opening of his three seaports to foreign trade. This, as he said, would assuredly lead to internecine strife, owing to the fear and jealousy it excited amongst the other Daimios, the sea-boards of whose domains were still strictly closed to such intercourse. Already they were crying out for the opening of their own harbours, or

the re-closing of the Imperial ports under the Tycoon's rule. To his sorrow he saw a foreign town springing up, into which alien people were flocking, bringing with them new habits and customs, which were rapidly spreading, to the great detriment of the Japanese. Strong drinks had been introduced that made men mad, and the strange religion that in the old days had produced so much mischief in "Dai Nippon" had been brought back to destroy respect for the ancient gods. The only remedy he saw for the evils at hand was a return to the old law, excluding all foreigners, and getting those already in the country out of it again as soon as possible. He thought that by the murder of some of their principal men this could be brought about, as it would frighten the others into running away. He laid his plans accordingly. His first proceeding was to write to his Prince a formal declaration that he had become a "ronin," an outlaw, a No Man's man. This was done, that in accordance with the Samurai code of honour, neither the chief of his clan, nor other of its members, should be held responsible for any action on his part, whatever its nature might be. His idea was to commence by killing some of the Consuls and principal merchants as they rode about the country. For this he wanted more knowledge as to their habits, and the aid of confederates ready to second his actions in all respects. I was in uniform and, referring to my position as a fighting man, he expressed his great regret that he had not known the foreigners riding down the avenue were "yakonins." Had he known they were "brothers of the sword" he would not have touched them, as they carried no weapons. Two young Samurai were induced to join him, and they went off to Kamakura to lie in wait for any "tojins" going to the Buddha. When I told him that I had been sleeping there, with two friends, the previous night, he expressed his pleasure

that I had not been one of their victims. His story, lengthy as it was, came to an end just before a messenger arrived, followed by a "norimon," the box-like travelling-chair, much in use by the well-to-do Japanese before the advent of the ricksha. He brought orders from the Governor. The prisoner was to be conveyed back to the prison in the "norimon," as the execution had been postponed until the morrow. With "sayonaras" (good-byes) we took leave of guards, prisoner, and executioners, and wended our way back to the Settlement. There on arrival we learned the cause of the delay.

An obstinate diplomatic struggle had been going on the whole time, between our Minister and the Japanese authorities, which came to an end late in the evening with a victory for British firmness. The Governor of Kanagawa wished to terminate the proceedings that day. Sir Rutherford Alcock declared that there would not be sufficient time after the public parade of the prisoner for the other arrangements to be carried out properly. The troops and sailors could not be landed so late in the day. According to the Governor the execution could not take place on the morrow as it was the Emperor's birthday, upon which anniversary no man could be put to death. The Minister replied that the choice of such a day was all the more fitting, as the execution would thereby create a greater impression upon evil-intentioned people. Every argument was used in vain endeavours to break down Sir Rutherford's decision, but at last the Japanese authorities gave way. The following morning all Yokohama was on foot and horseback at an early hour. Diplomatic personages and Consuls in full uniform, foreign merchants and traders of all nationalities and status in white "topies" and light clothing of every hue and style, and officers off duty in their uniforms. They were soon followed by the troops of the

Garrison and detachments of bluejackets landed from the Fleet. These men on arrival were formed up in three lines of a hollow square, facing the execution ground. The mass of civilian spectators spread themselves about the hillsides, as near to the enclosure as they could get. It was not long before the latter began to fill up, and prior to the arrival of the Governor there was little free space within, save that reserved for the executioners and the approach to the official-standing positions for the Japanese authorities and our Minister and his suite. I had taken time by the forelock, and so managed to secure a position which afforded me the clearest possible view of the whole proceedings.

The Governor had hardly taken his place when a dark coloured "norimon," borne by four coolies, entered the enclosure. The door was opened and out stepped the prisoner, no longer bound, and neatly dressed in a long dark-grey kimono, without any over-jacket. Turning in a calm, sedate manner towards the Governor he gravely complained of ill-treatment, in that he had been brought away from prison without having had his morning repast. Acknowledging the omission, a messenger was at once dispatched, and in a very short time arrived a lacquer box containing food. Its contents were spread before him; a large bowl of boiled rice with several others of smaller size, containing under their covers condiments of various kind to give the rice a flavour. There was also a small bottle of "saki" and a drinking-cup. With the utmost "sangfroid" he proceeded to make his meal, and having finished, rose, and, bowing to the Governor, requested to be granted a few minutes in which to take his farewell of the world. His request granted, he first glared at us within the enclosure, then upon those outside on either side, and last of all upon the soldiers and sailors standing under arms below. It was terrible, if interesting, to watch the play of his

features as he cursed us, the foreigners, who were bringing ruin and disaster upon his beloved country, and destroying its hallowed institutions. Nothing could surpass the ferocity of the hatred depicted in the expression of his features as he called down upon us the wrath of the gods to meet us in every action of our lives. It was a very tempest of anger, a veritable tornado, whilst it lasted. It was really wonderful to see, how the moment this outburst came to an end, his features settled down into a soft and serene expression, I might say a happy one. It certainly showed great confidence and contentment, as, lifting his gaze upwards, he once again sang the prayer for his Prince, as he had done when hearing his death-warrant read in the prison.

Bowing courteously to the Governor when he had finished, he signified that he was ready, and knelt down upon the mat, and with a smile on his face placed his head over the hole. One of the assistants commenced to tie a bandage over his eyes, but he tore it away with his hands and indignantly threw it aside. The collar of his kimono was thrown back so as to leave the neck well free. The chief executioner approached, and poising the sword was about to deliver the fatal blow, when the kneeling prisoner looked up in his face. Something was said by him that made the swordsman burst out laughing, and the weapon dropped by his side. The next moment the man's head was again in position. One saw the sword raised quickly. There was a flash through the air and the head flew off into the hole with a spurt of blood from the neck as the lifeless body fell aside, and all was over.

For three days the head, in accordance with the sentence, was exposed beside the placard on the highway leading to Yedo. Thus passed beyond the Great Barrier, with a joke on his lips, the soul of one who in Japanese eyes might well be considered

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a hero and martyr, though we could but look upon him as a murderer. He was, however, undoubtedly a very brave fellow and full of patriotic intention, and "Peace to his ashes" may well be said of his incinerated remains.

## CHAPTER XV

## LIFE ON SHORE IN JAPAN

THERE was a lull in affairs at Yokohama for some time after the events I have just described, and life continued to run on pleasant lines. We had an occasional earthquake, for Japan, unfortunately for its inhabitants, is a land where such awe-inspiring phenomena are prevalent. None of any consequence, however, I am glad to say occurred during my several visits, but we had frequent shocks to remind us of the instability of the earth's crust in the vicinity of volcanoes. Yokohama lies in the direct line between Vries Island off the Gulf of Yedo, with its fire mountain always in activity, and Fujiyama which though quiescent for centuries has probably still the forces of combustion smouldering within its womb. We were apparently right in the way of earthquake waves set in motion between them, merely light ripples as we experienced them, but sufficient to set the loose-jointed bungalows rocking to and fro, as in a ship anchored in a tide-way, or a stream, with the wind setting upon her beam. It reminded me of my West African experiences, and didn't disturb my equanimity very much. Very disastrous earthquakes have occurred, however, at various periods since I left the country, and a very remarkable one took place before I got there. It was during the Crimean War, and lying "perdu" in a very snug harbour just within the entrance to the Gulf of Yedo was the *Diana*, a Russian frigate that had escaped the vigilance of our



Fleet operating off Vladivostock. There were three great shocks, and with each one the sea receded completely, leaving the vessel with no water at all under her bottom. Her cables must have been unusually strong, and her anchors well bedded, as in spite of the violence with which she was swung round by the great wave of returning water, she was still afloat when the dreadful visitation came to an end. But she met with a watery grave after all, foundering suddenly from some inexplicable cause as she was being towed away to some more fitting place for over-haul and repair.

We didn't get much sea-work in the *Kestrel*, as dry-rot had developed to some extent in these old gun-boats, hurriedly built for service in the Baltic during the Russian War, and distributed about the various stations, where light-draft small craft were required. Signs of it were showing in the *Kestrel*, and she was not considered to be sufficiently seaworthy to be exposed to very bad weather in the open sea far from land. So our sailing-work was confined to the upper part of the Gulf of Yedo, between Yokohama and Yedo, where we messed about in crab-like fashion, making more lee-way than progress ahead. However, it was good exercise for the men, and it was a pleasant change. Then, to our surprise, one day we received other "sailing-orders." We were to accompany the frigate *Severn* for a cruise outside the Gulf altogether. The wind was light when we started, and we had to steam in addition to setting such sail as would draw in order to keep station. We got outside all right, and had reached some distance off the land when a gale set in. It blew jolly hard throughout the whole night, and the *Severn* lost sight of us. There was no electricity for signalling purposes in those days, and no flashing-lights with which to make enquiries as to our condition, so they got very nervous on board our mother-

ship, and the next morning great was the relief of the Commodore to see us bobbing up and down over the great waves. We were ordered by distant flag-signals to make our way back to Yokohama. We had been all right as we "lay to under" "storm stay-sails" and closer reefed "fore and aft mainsail," and I had quite enjoyed it. The vessel was just like a cork on the water, and had shown herself to be a very good sea-boat. We were not sorry, however, to return to our old anchorage off the Hatoba. Not long after this a Russian Admiral arrived, and we found the *Kestrel* told off to take him to Yedo the following morning. He wished to pay a visit to the Tycoon's Government, and as his flagship drew too much water to allow of any near approach on her part to the city, our Commander-in-Chief had offered him the use of our little ship. But alas! for my hope of another glimpse of Yedo, and as I am sorry to say also for the credit of our Navy, it was on this occasion found a little wanting. We had not got much more than three miles away from the anchorage when a breakdown occurred in the engine-room, and we had to let go our anchor. Signals were made to the flagship, and whilst our guests were being taken back to their vessel in the boats sent off to receive them, we crawled slowly back under easy steam, after a slight temporary repair. I had been invited by the ward-room officers accompanying the Admiral, as they were leaving, to breakfast with them. It was my first acquaintance with Russians. I had never met one of that nation before, and it was a very novel experience for me. I found them very nice gentlemanly fellows, several of them speaking English quite well, and others French.

I subsequently met other Russian officers at Nagasaki. That port was a favourite station for Russian men-o'-war, of which quite a decent-sized squadron was maintained even in

those days in the China Seas. There was nearly always one or more corvettes wintering there. Their officers whom I met seemed, however, to be of a somewhat different stamp to those of the flagship. Both they and their vessels had a somewhat slovenly appearance, and as far as we could judge there was little in the way of exercise carried on. It was said, indeed, that the officers spent most of their time on shore, gambling and drinking in a house they had hired for the purpose.

Three days after our little engine trouble the Russian Admiral started again for Yedo, but not in the *Kestrel*. We were all right again, but the Commander-in-Chief would not trust him and his staff to us for the trip. The *Bouncer* was placed at his disposal instead, and how my opposite number crowed over me! There was a Nemesis, however, in store, and the laugh soon came from our side. The *Bouncer*, on her return, managed to run ashore on the Kawasaki Spit, the wide outlying mud-flat off the Kawasaki shore, and it was the despised little *Kestrel* which went to her assistance, and towed her off after her passengers had been landed.

Sir Rutherford Alcock had left and Sir Harry Parkes reigned in his place as Minister, and not very long after his arrival we took him in our little craft, restored to favour by our towing exploit, up to Yedo, his escort going overland. As we were to be there for several days whilst His Excellency was transacting business with the Council of the Tycoon, I thought I might find an opportunity for taking a few photographs.

There was at the time, residing in Yokohama, a photographer who had attained a high reputation for the excellence of his work in respect to both portraiture views and landscapes. He was quite a character in a way and a general favourite for his open-handedness and the good temper with which he met his reverses.

He had taken up photography in the Crimean War, and going off to India during the Mutiny, worked there for some time, and went on to China. He followed our Army, and was at the sack of the Summer Palace, and made a nice little sum by the purchase and subsequent sale of loot with which he returned to Constantinople. Thinking to make a fortune in a short time he took to the Bourse, and soon lost it all. Off he went to the Far East again, moving on from China to Japan. The gambling fever, however, was ever upon him. He was well paid for his portraits and albums of views, but the work was a "side-line," and whenever he had been able to put by sufficient money, off he went into speculation. Not long before I reached Japan he had made what some would have considered a little fortune, but lost it again in the endeavour to enlarge it. His name was Beat. No one knew his real origin, and no one troubled themselves about it. He spoke funny English, and it was an amusement to draw him into a long argument. His most usual expression of welcome was: "I am delight!" He used it on every occasion.

We had become great friends, and when I heard of our approaching trip to Yedo I went to him and told him what I wanted to do, and he willingly fitted me out with a portable dark-room and all the necessary gear and chemicals on condition that I handed over to him the plates of any photos I might be able to take. We left soon enough in the morning for His Excellency to land at Yedo in ample time to settle down before his tiffin, to which he invited the Captain and myself. I spoke to him about my desire to do a bit of photography, and he was kind enough to arrange that I should have a "Yakonin Guard" to meet me when I landed the next day with my outfit, so that I might start work at once. Photography in the open was no easy matter in those days, and my friend Beat's success in that line

was due to his wonderful skill in manipulating his plates. There was nothing but the wet process as yet to the fore. It was still in the full vigour of employment as the dry plate had not passed beyond a very elementary stage of experimental success, and the gelatine film had not even entered the realm of thought. The reader can imagine me marching off when I landed surrounded by my escort of six fine-looking, two-sworded gentry. I was carrying the camera, fixed upon its stand, ready for use at a moment's notice, with a coolie alongside of me carting along the portable dark chamber. This consisted of a large box with all the requisites, a folding table for it to stand upon, and a large square mantle of red cotton material to serve as a covering for the whole, and screen off all rays of light but those wanted for the production of the photograph. Two small panes of red-coloured glass were fitted into the sides of the covering to give a little more illumination than the cotton cloth allowed. Intense was the curiosity our appearance excited, and it wasn't long before we had a tail to our procession that developed into a big crowd by the time I commenced my preparations for my first picture. The Globe Trotter of the present day, armed with a quick-firing Kodak, knows nothing of the troubles of the Old Timer of the wet process. The former has but to touch the button and "we do the rest," as the advertisements say, whilst the latter had to carefully pour collodion over a glass plate to form a film, and then, at the right moment, dip it into the mercury bath. Then, with it in the transport frame, I turned my attention to the camera, which I had previously fixed in position, and focussed, with one of the guards standing by to see that no one meddled with it. Another hasty look and all was in readiness. Unfortunately I had not thought it necessary to warn the eagerly gaping crowd not to move. With watch in one hand I removed

the cap cover and instantly half a dozen heads were striving to see what was inside the curious-looking machine on three outstretched legs. I felt a bit distressed over it, but I could not feel very angry, considering the bait I had offered to their ever-growing curiosity. I got the "yakonins" to explain to them that they had spoilt the effect of my incantations, and that the next time I approached the wonderful object they were gazing upon, they must all keep perfectly quiet. I got them also to arrange that portion of the crowd near us into two lines on each side, far enough apart to be out of the field of vision. I prepared another plate, and all went well until I had taken my shot and removed the "shutter frame." I had just got into the operating tent and drawn the covering round when suddenly I found the whole thing toppling over. Fortunately I had not yet taken out the plate, and the photo was saved. I clutched at the mercury bath, and fortunately succeeded in saving about two-thirds of its contents, not sufficient to cover a whole plate, but still enough to carry on with, and succeeded in taking several rather good photos in my subsequent attempts. The accident had occurred through the pressure of the people behind the dark chamber in their anxiety to see what was going to happen with the hidden thing I had put into the camera and carried away again.

My next attempt was the forefront of a famous temple. The court-yard was full of people, as it was a special fête day. Warned by my previous experience, I took possession of the platform of a small shrine, with steps leading up to it, and placing my "yakonins" about, so as to prevent all access to my operating-position, I got my picture all right. I followed this plan on all subsequent occasions, and was well satisfied with the result of my day's work, although in addition to the little present I felt bound to give my escort I ruined the gold lace on my left sleeve



### SHIBA AT YEDO.

(SHIBA PARK IS ONE OF THE LARGEST PARKS IN THE CAPITAL AND CONTAINS VARIOUS BUDDHIST TEMPLES, INCLUDING THE MOST FAMOUS.)





by the nitrate of silver that fell upon it from the bath. These photographs of mine, I may mention, were the very first that were ever taken in Tokio, Yedo as the place was called whilst the capital of the Tycoon.

It was not long after this that the smouldering discontent amongst the Daimios burst out into an attempt on the part of one of them to bar the Straits of Shimonoseki against the passage of foreign steamers. He was a Daimio, called Chiosin, who ruled over a large province bordering one side of those Straits, the Western entrance to the Suino-Nada, the Inland Sea. Remonstrances to the Gorogio\* were of no avail. Chiosin was too powerful a Prince for the Tycoon to tackle without the aid of other Daimios, and the cause was not popular enough for that. So it was determined to teach the truculent Daimio a lesson. The whole of the ships-of-war then lying at anchor off Yokohama steamed away, leaving the little *Kestrel* on guard to assist the Garrison in its defence of the settlement, should an attack be made upon Yokohama during the absence of the Fleet. Our old rôle of the previous scare was assigned to us, and there we lay, with steam up and guns "cleared for action at night," whilst the Fleet was operating in the Inland Sea, and winning the Battle of Shimonoseki. The battle was very far-reaching in its effects. Sir Harry Parkes proceeded with the Fleet to Osaka and Kioto on his return journey to Yokohama, and managed to open up communication with the Mikado. He unearthed, as it were, that puissant Emperor who up to that time Europeans had been wont to consider somewhat a mythic personage, a sort of diplomatic Mrs. Harris, whose prejudices were made to serve as excuses for resisting foreign pressure. The Battle of Shimonoseki greatly enhanced our prestige in Japan, and I found a much

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\* The Council of the Tycoon.

more friendly atmosphere prevailing at my next visit to Yedo the following year.

As I have already mentioned, I had plenty of spare time and from the first days of my arrival in the *Tartar* I had been learning Japanese by an easy method of my own. I commenced by learning so many words a day, the names of everything I saw, and writing out useful sentences and memorising them by constant repetition. I made up in this way a vocabulary for myself and a conversational phrase book, which I used on all occasions, chatting with the shopkeepers and the little "mousmies" of the tea-houses I dropped into when taking my walks abroad. I had made great friends with one of the officers of the Custom House. Like all the Japanese I came across in those days he was very curious about Western habits, and anxious to learn all he could. His particular desire was to learn navigation, so I took him in hand, and he used to come off to the *Kestrel* two or three times a week in the forenoon, when we were in harbour, to show me his work and receive a fresh lesson. As examples of the curiosity of the Japanese I may mention that in the early 'sixties, when the first European lady landed at Yokohama, she had to step back hurriedly into the boat again, as the Japanese who came round her at once began endeavouring to raise her dress to see what her underclothing was like. The first mission for instruction in modern Western habits, sent by the Japs, was dispatched, not to Europe, but to America. It went by way of the Sandwich Islands to San Francisco, and when I arrived at Oahu, during my voyage in the Pacific on board the *Charybdis*, the ladies were still full of the trouble the insatiable curiosity of its members had caused them. They invaded their houses, and with their invariably smiling imperturbability simply could not be prevented from perambulating all parts of the premises.

when I first went there were even more curious. They were built upon the model of the craft constructed by Will Adams.\* We could only see them from a distance, as no visitors were allowed to approach them, but they looked as if they were the resuscitated ghosts of Dutch and English fighting-ships of that day and carried top-castles and forecastles. The sailors worked the ship in the waist and fired the guns, whilst the soldiers held the fore-castles and "poop," *i.e.*, the waist being the deck below the bulwark.

This reminds me of a curious spectacle seen in the harbour of Yokohama. Our Government had presented the Tycoon with a small steam-yacht, about the size of the Royal yacht *Elfin*. When handed over, the Japanese were so anxious to try the new toy, that relying upon the knowledge acquired by a few of their people, like those who had built and equipped the small craft above mentioned, they took charge at once. No sooner had the foreign crew left than the Jappies "upped anchor" for a trip by themselves. They started her all right and kept the fires going, but when they wanted to stop and anchor at the end of their little cruise, something went wrong, and they found they couldn't do it. The Japanese, however, were equal to the occasion; they raked out the fires and steamed round and round until the motive power came to an end, and she came to rest of her own accord as it were, like a child in a temper whose anger had worked itself out.

We found an old paddle frigate lying at Nagasaki called the *Leopard*. She was one of the last to be employed as a cruising man-o'-war, for the paddle-wheel was fast becoming obsolete with the invention and rapid improvement of the screw propeller. Her Captain, I won't mention his name, was rather

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\* In the service of Netherlands trading interests, Adams reached Japan 1600, was taken into Imperial favour, built several small ships for the Ruler Hideyoshi, settled and died in Japan, 1620.

addicted to what is called "elevating the little finger," and was rather pompous after a good dinner. He was dining with the Admiral on board the *Adventure* the night of our arrival, and just as I had come off from the shore I heard the order given to bring his gig alongside. I was lingering on deck, leaning over the bulwark, when up came the Captain of the *Leopard*, followed by the Flag-Captain. With measured step he was approaching the gangway, when looking towards his ship, he noticed that only one of the peak-lanterns was burning. For the sake of those not acquainted with the custom of the Navy I must explain that when the Captain of a man-o'-war is ashore after sunset, and it is known that he is not going to remain out of the ship all night, two lanterns are kept burning brightly at the "peak," to indicate the position of the vessel. "What's this? What's this? By Jove! only one light! Ho! officer of the watch! Officer of 'the watch!" I heard him exclaim. "Oh, it's all right, old chappie," answered a voice at his side. "It's all right, don't you understand the reason? Good fellow, your officer of the watch, he knew you would be seeing double by this time, and didn't want you to be puzzled by having four lanterns before your eyes. Good-night," and the speaker, the Flag-Captain, was off to his cabin as the Admiral's guest went down the side.

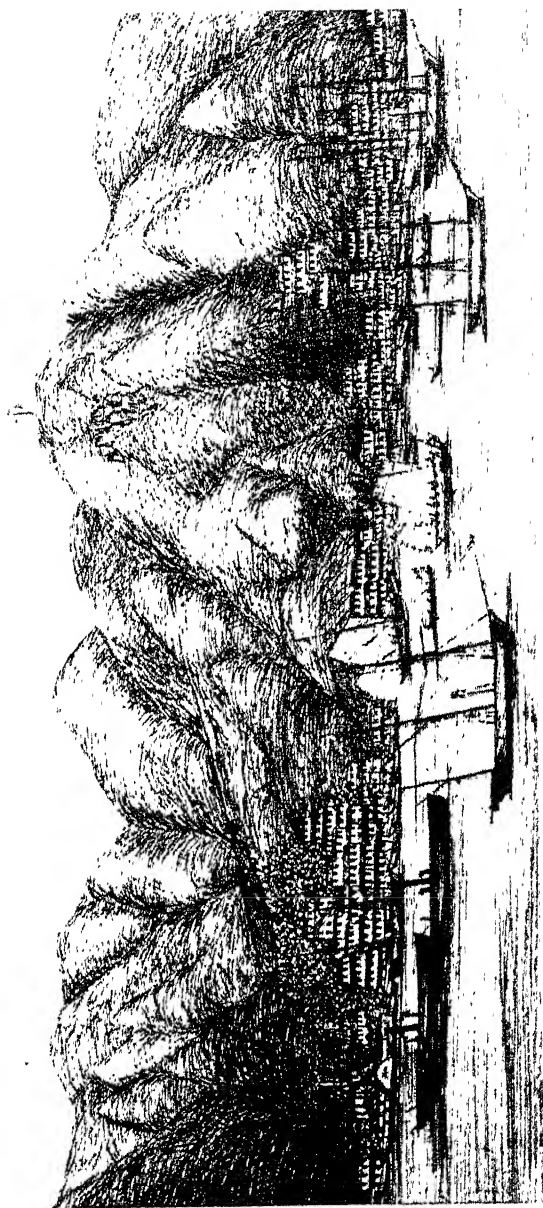
It was January 23rd, 1866, that I joined the *Cormorant*. She was a screw steamer of 695 tons, armed with two very heavy revolving smooth-bore guns amidships, one a 68-pounder, mounted at the fore-part of the vessel, and the other a 110-pounder shell gun, at the after. In addition to these two large guns, we carried, one on each side amidships, small brass howitzers, 38 pounders. I met with a very kind reception from my Captain, who had just read himself into command in the presence of the assembled ship's company and officers. Commander George Broad was very good-

looking in feature, with a most pleasing expression, though somewhat short, and slightly like his own patronymic in person, and I felt sure from the first that I should be able to get on well with him. As to my shipmates, from the First Lieutenant, a handsome, tall fellow called Singleton, to the Paymaster's Clerk, they were as nice a set of men as could well have been got together. Our old Chief Engineer, white-haired, though comparatively young, possessed a face that had kind-heartedness and good temper written all over it. His name was Taylor, and I was never more delighted when some eleven years after we had parted in Japan he turned up in Turkish waters, Chief Engineer of the *Alexandria*, bearing the flag of Admiral Sir Geoffrey Hornby. We had one other Lieutenant and a harum-scarum Mate, by the name of Ryder, full of fun and frolic, with whom I became very chummy. The *Cormorant* had been thoroughly overhauled and repaired as well as re-fitted with new rigging, so that there was little to do in the way of preparation for sea but to draw stores and provisions for a lengthy cruise away from Hong Kong. I was very much more my own master now than when I was lying at anchor there, in the *Charybdis*, and was able to go on shore as much as I wanted.

It was the winter season, the best time of the year. The Races were on. They lasted three days, and a very jolly three days they were. They took place over a fine circular course, with a lovely setting, a fine long wide break in the hills, called "Happy Valley," and their great feature was the Challenge Cup, a large massive silver trophy, for which racehorses imported from England by the rival houses, Jardine, Mathieson & Co. and Dent & Co., competed. Very keen was the competition for racing honours between the employés of these two firms, and in every race would be seen the blue and silver colours of the Jardine,

Mathiesons, and the white and pink of the Dents. It was only in the Challenge Cup run, and other specially arranged matches, that the imported racehorses ran. There were only two out there when these meetings took place, "Sir William," the pride of the Jardine's stables, and "Exeter," that of Dent's. I believe these were the very last racers imported from England. The house of Dent & Co. had been on the wane for some time, and in less than a year after, news reached us in Japan that the firm had been brought to ruin through the defalcations of a trusted cashier. Apart from these two horses mentioned above, which alone ran for the Challenge Cup, there was an ample field of entries for all the other races in the native and half-bred Arab horses brought from India, possessed by junior members of the firms and others. The Challenge Cup, previously held by Sir William, was on this occasion won by Exeter. It had, however, to be won two years in succession by the same horse before it could become the possession of any owner of one which had won it.

Those were still the palmy days of Jardine, Mathieson & Co., since Dent & Co. had only been a rival in a small way, and, with their fast steamships running between Hong Kong and Bombay, and outstripping the mail steamers which had commenced, during the few previous years, to Hong Kong, Shanghai and Japan once a month, they could still command the market to their own special profit. I remember whilst we were steaming down the Straits of Malacca, one of these vessels, the *Lye-re-moon*, the fastest steamship in the world at the time, slipping past us as if we were merely at anchor. They were a small East India Co. in a way, as it seemed to me, as they possessed a military force of sepoy's of their own for the defence of their extensive "Godowns" and offices, and quite a Fleet of man-o'-war fast



*P. Peillon.*  
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# HONG KONG, CHINA, IN THE EARLY SIXTIES





sailing-brigs and schooners for fighting their way with the opium, so coveted by the Chinese, through the cordons of Customs guards, "mandarin junks" and row-boats. Very smart craft these brigs and schooners looked, maintained as they were quite on a man-o'-war footing, with Lascar crews, British officers, quartermasters and gunners' mates.

The hospitality of these great mercantile firms, especially the Jardine, Mathieson & Co., was unbounded. Open house was kept for all visitors who presented themselves with any sort of recommendation. There was a senior mess for the principal members of the firm, to which all Captains of ships-of-war, and special Naval friends, had standing invitations. There was also a junior mess, where those of lesser rank were made equally welcome. During the three days' racing there were royal spreads in large marquees for all comers, and champagne cup and other cool drinks were flowing the whole time. I had plenty of spare time after the first few weeks as I had no watch to keep, so I made a second visit to Canton, and also one to Macao, the last Portuguese possession in the Far East. I went to Canton with a good fellow called Costigern, who had several friends there, and we spent three very pleasant days as the guests of one of the members of the firm of Gibbs, Livingston. We inspected the Beggar's Square, where we saw a large collection of the dregs of Chinese humanity. They were the most awful-looking creatures, squalid, dirty and loathsome, most of them apparently in the last stages of dilapidation, both in respect to their physical condition and tattered clothing. I do not suppose that many persons in the present day have ever heard of the begging fraternity of Canton. It may not exist now, but at the time of which I am writing, it was quite an old established time-honoured institution of considerable influence. There was a King of the

Beggars, and they were divided off into guilds under subordinate chiefs. They lived in their own special district, from which each guild sent forth its squads in rotation, to carry on their begging operations within the spheres of action assigned to it by their supreme chief. This was more in the nature of a blackmail levy, as when the alms demanded were not forthcoming, or the contribution was too small to please them, the beggars present simply broke into the shop, or dwelling-house, and did all the damage they possibly could, taking away anything they fancied. So great was the strength and influence of the Beggars' Corporation that most of the shopkeepers and others, who had to fear their depredations, purchased immunity from these visits on the part of its members by the payment of fixed amounts to the King at regular intervals.

My trip to Macao was also a very pleasant affair, if not so interesting as this second one to Canton. The river-boat which took me and brought me back was the *Fee-Sin*, which during the Chinese War had flown a Naval pennant as H.M.S. *Cowper*, under the command of my new Captain, who fought with her at the capture of Peiho. I went to Macao in acceptance of a long-standing invitation from a friend whose acquaintance I had made at Callao, Don Antonio Cantuarias, the Peruvian gentleman with whom I used to ride about the valley of the Rimac, and who accompanied me on a visit to Lima. When we were parting company he made me promise that if ever I went to China I would look him up in Macao, where he was shortly going to join his brother, the Peruvian Consul. Macao had a very gay appearance from the sea, as the houses were all painted in bright colours of various hues. There was a fine promenade called the Prado, where the fashionable world of Macao was wont to congregate in the cool of the evening. I cannot say its youth and

beauty were to be seen there. Youth, yes, but good looks formed no part of the possessions of the Macanese that I could see in the promenades I took there with my friend, even on the Sunday morning. There is such an admixture of Chinese and other blood of the Far East that men and women all alike are dark complexioned, and have somewhat prominent cheek-bones, black eyes and long, sleek hair of the same colour. There are some fine, large, stone buildings, dating from the early days of Macao's prosperity, as well as some comfortable-looking modern houses, constructed to meet the requirements of the climate. The whole place looked neat and clean, and the streets in good order. Gangs of prisoners are kept continually at work, sweeping, cleaning and repairing them, as well as all connecting thoroughfares.

In the harbour were lying quite a large number of sailing-vessels, all waiting for their human cargoes of Chinese coolies. There was a brisk trade going on at this time in the so-called indented labour for working in the guano deposits of the Chincha Islands, and the plantations of Peru and other parts of South America. I saw the two great places of attraction for visitors in Macao, the Ringing Rocks and Camoens' Grotto, in which the exiled Portuguese poet wrote his most famous poem, the "*Lusiad*." The Ringing Rocks are on a neighbouring island, to which we went in a ferry-boat. We landed on a beach strewn with boulders, and passing up a narrow gorge, over similar obstacles, entered a valley between barren hills which was so covered at all parts with enormous massive stones that one could only liken it to a battle-field, where Titans had fought out a great quarrel. There were two of these boulders of much length and width, each lying across another of similar dimensions. They are thus slightly suspended in the air, and when struck give out a sharp metallic sound, like that of a bell, and hence their name.

Returning to Macao we went in the afternoon to Camoens' Garden. It is extensive and well laid out, as I saw it then, but in a very neglected condition. A curious feature of the garden was a large-sized tree growing out of a great boulder, which had been split in the process into several pieces, and then been strongly bound together by its roots and lower branches. There were several of these boulders lying about the garden, and under some shady trees were two very large ones, standing on end, with a third across, forming the so-called Grotto which bears the poet's name.

I left Macao early the next morning with some regret as I had met with such kindness there, but we were under orders to sail on the 26th for Yokohama, in Japan, touching at all the Treaty Ports on the way. There was just the one day in which to bid our friends adieu, and it was a Sunday. I dined that night with my old friend Thornton, chief clerk of the Harbour Master's office, who did me very well, and we visited many friends afterwards. It was very late when I reached the ship, and few were the hours of sleep before me. We were under way an hour or so after daylight and steaming away for the Lye-re-moon Pass, leading out into the China Sea. As we were in pilotage waters and I could not leave the navigation of the vessel to the officer of the watch until we were well away from the Island and in the open, I gave no thought myself to the question of breakfast. In fact, I felt no want of any, but the Captain, with the kindness and consideration he ever showed me afterwards, did so for me. "Oh, Woods," he remarked, "it will be some time yet before we get outside, and the ward-room breakfast will be over; you had better come and have breakfast with me when we are clear of the land." "Thank you, sir," I replied, "I'll be glad to accept." When, in due course, the time came for

that breakfast I was anything but glad. It was the season of the north monsoon, which behaves very differently in the China Seas to what it does in the Indian Ocean. It is not the pleasant mild wind which makes it such jolly sailing for passengers going to India in the winter months. In Chinese waters that child of Boreas, during the same season, is often on the rampage.

We had no sooner reached open water than we met a strong head wind, with a nasty sea. I set the course, handed over care of the navigation to the officer of the watch, and followed the Captain down to his cabin at his cheery call, "Come along and let us have breakfast." Oh, that breakfast! Shall I ever forget it? The *Cormorant* was a light-draft ship, and as we went over the big seas her screw came continually right out of the water, and with no resistance to meet, went spinning round at racing speed. The cabin was right aft, and to sit down to a table immediately over that propeller, to eat fried eggs and bacon, was a great trial to both head and stomach after such a lengthened stay in harbour. There was the see-sawing motion of the ship, in which one felt as if the stomach and the "innards," as Jack called the heart and liver, etc., were engaged in a mad race with the shell of the body, to see which could rise the most quickly upwards. The "whirr, whirring" of the screw when out of water alternating with the slow "cloppitty, cloppitty" sound of its action during the short intervals of its immersion, was maddening to the head, and the sight of the food on the table anything but appetising. I won't dwell upon the painful scene. The Captain helped me pretty liberally, taking a much smaller portion himself. Neither of us liked to own up, but looked askance at each other out of the corner of one eye whilst the other was fixed upon the plate. We vainly essayed to swallow a mouthful. I was wondering what on earth I was going to do

with mine, when to my great relief I heard him exclaim, " Woods, I can't stand any more of this," as he ran into his sleeping-cabin and drew the curtain. " No more can I, sir," I replied, as I ran up the after-ladder to reach the bridge as quickly as possible. What he did with his mouthful I can only guess. What I did with mine, I know. I think I had the best of it, as holding on to the bridge-rails in the central part of the ship, her balancing motion was much less, and the strong wind blowing in my face cooled my fevered brow.

We had very rough, stormy weather on our voyage northward nearly the whole time. We had to seek shelter twice before we got to Swatow, our first port of call, as we found it so useless to hammer away, making little more than a couple of knots an hour, at the price of full speed in coal consumption. Swatow itself lies some distance up the Nuio River, and it did not seem to be a place of any great importance. Seeing how difficult it had been for us to get as far as Swatow, I proposed to the Captain that we should make an inshore voyage, taking advantage as much as possible of the position of the numerous islands, large and small, which skirt that part of the China coast below the Yangtse River. To this he agreed, and I had some thrilling moments at times guiding the ship through narrow intricate channels I had never seen before, with mist and heavy blinding rain occasionally. As a matter of fact I took her through the Namoa Straits without a chart. In those days there were no comfortable chart-houses on the bridges of men-o'-war, such as there are now, even in quite the smallest vessels of the Navy. I had a " flying table " with a glass flap cover, which could be fixed to the rail when required. Unfortunately, just as we entered the Straits, and I was taking a " bearing " with the Standard Compass, the large scale chart of the Island and its

waters flew overboard with a sudden gust of wind. I looked up as I heard the Captain exclaim, "Woods, the chart's gone, have you got another?" and saw it vanish. "Oh, yes, sir, it's all right," I replied. I didn't want to disturb his confidence. I did have another one in a way, but it was in my head, for I had well studied the passage before starting. There were also two rocks, however, called Chelnen and Crojon, near the other exit, between which we had to pass. They were of no great height above the water, and not so very far apart, yet I confidently expected to see them. I did not feel very happy, I must say, as we ran our distance, and with all the sharpness of vision I then possessed, I could discern nothing of them in the dusk of the evening. We soon, however, got beyond all danger, and that we had passed safely between them I was assured of, as otherwise the poor old *Cormorant* might have left her bones on one or other of the reefs lying on either side of the Channel.

Our next port was Amoy, a place of much greater importance. We arrived there in the morning of the 2nd, and remained over the next day. Here we met the sloop *Scylla*, commanded by Captain Courtney, and an American corvette, with an amusing Yankee Captain in command. He could spin some good yarns, and so could my own skipper. Indeed, he was known on the station as "Brassy Broad," and was sometimes called "Tom Pepper," after the traditional good liar of the service, on account of his proficiency in "drawing the long bow." I was witness in a contest between the two, the night before we left Amoy, as to which could beat the other in tall stories. It was at a dinner given by Captain Broad to the two Naval Captains of the *Scylla* and the *Wyoming*, at which I and Singleton, our First Lieutenant, were the two other guests. It would be difficult for me to say which of the two really deserved to take the "cake," but it was

extremely funny when Captain Courtney left to return to his ship, and his host had gone to see him over the side, to find the Yankee turning to me with the remark, "Wal say, isn't that Captain of yours some liar." With quite a smile of admiration I deprecated, however, his modesty in showing such appreciation of my Captain's achievements, by reminding him in reply of how well he himself could do in that line. I assured him that although the others might think it was a case of "honours divided," on the whole his own success in the field of "romantic narrative" was, in my opinion, greater than that of his host. But more amusing still was it to see the look of disgust upon Captain Broad's face, when returning to the cabin after expediting his American competitor, he took up his whisky and soda, saying: "My word, what a champion liar, Woods. I saw you gaping with wonder as you swallowed all those tough yarns. But most of them stuck in my throat, and I must wash them down."

Both ships got under way the next morning, and we had a bit of a race together to Foochow, a very important centre of the tea-exporting trade, in those days, about forty miles up the Niun River. We were first at the anchorage off Pagoda Island after being outstripped in the open sea. Above the Island the river shallows rapidly, and no vessels of any size above a small gunboat, can approach Foochow, just ten miles higher up. Pagoda Islet was well known to the skippers of the famous tea-clippers which used to race home for the "New Hat," as was called the guerdon of the one who brought home for the London market the first delivery of the new season's tea. I had a pleasant look over Foochow but, returning, it took me seven hours in miserable weather to do ten miles in various sampans. We soon reached our next port, Shanghai, and of this I will only mention that the



principal thing that struck me about it was the great consumption of cocktails, and the large number of those insidious drinks I was called upon to imbibe during my first day ashore. I was not charmed with Shanghai, although it was a very hospitable place.

## CHAPTER XVII

## THE EARLY EUROPEANS IN JAPAN

WE only remained five days at Shanghai, having received an order from the Admiral to proceed with all dispatch to Nagasaki, and leaving on March 18th, arrived at our destination on the 22nd. As on former occasions, Japan gave me no smiling welcome. We had little wind during our passage across, but we had dull nasty weather, and it was not easy to take observations on account of the mist. However, about noon on the 21st, it cleared up a little, and I got a sight of Cape Goto, just as I had worked out the latitude. We were within seventy miles of the entrance of the long fiord at the head of which stands Nagasaki, and according to our rate of speed would arrive off the Islet of Pappenberg by 7 p.m. Bad weather, however, was evidently setting in, and at 6 p.m. as nothing could be seen of the land through the thick misty rains, I recommended the Captain to stop the ship and get a cast of the deep-sea lead. This was in the old days when the Watch had to line the side, each with a few turns in his hand of the lead-line, to pay out as the heavy lead thrown overboard at the "bows" went past him. The old experienced Quartermaster stood last of all near the "stern," holding the line as it came from the "reel," that he might tell when it had reached bottom. That it has done so, is shown by the marks and deposit upon the tallow placed in a hollow at its lower end, and spread over its adjoining surface. The depth is

shown by the measure marks that have run out, an allowance being made for the trend of the sounding-line at the moment the lead touched bottom. There was also a patent register in those days, attached to the lead, that showed the depth, if in proper working order, and one method served as a check upon the other. It was well that we had stopped and sounded when we did, as the operation was scarcely over, and we had decided to turn head to wind and "heave to," when a break in the thick mist showed land at no very great distance away from us. We kept steaming quietly at intervals throughout the night, and at day-break the next morning found ourselves off the islands lying outside the entrance to the Gulf of Nagasaki. As the sun rose, and all the clouds cleared away, the most lovely scenery was unfolded to our view. We found lying at Nagasaki the old *Leopard* which we had left behind when I went down to Hong Kong with the Admiral. She left three days after our arrival for England, ordered home before her commission was up, for reasons connected with the discipline on board. In fact, it was on account of this that we had been hurried up to Nagasaki, to relieve her.

The *Leopard* gone, we were left to ourselves, and could look forward to a delightful spell in a most comfortable landlocked harbour. We found a very nice hospitable community, prepared to receive us with open arms. There were a few English ladies amongst the residents, one a daughter of Sir Rutherford Alcock, married to Lowder, the Assistant Consul and Interpreter, a very nice little woman, chatty and agreeable. There was also Mrs. Alt, the wife of a merchant, head of Alt & Co., silk and tea merchants, a Firm which stood much in the same relation to Glover & Co., as Dent's did to Jardine's at Hong Kong. She was from Singapore, where her father had, during his life, held a high post

in the Police Force. She was the acknowledged belle of the place, being young and very good-looking. Her widowed mother, however, who lived with them, was the greater favourite in Society, as she was still comely of feature and possessed a really good singing voice. The leading merchant was Tom Glover, head of the firm of Glover & Co., who was one of the first Englishmen to establish himself in Japan, and had acquired a great deal of influence amongst the Japanese. He was hospitality personified, and the officers of the *Cormorant* were always welcome. His comfortable commodious bungalow stood on the top of a bluff, terminating a spur running down from the hill behind. It was admirably situated, with a commanding view all over the harbour and down the gulf. There was space enough within the compound for a good-sized flower garden, and from its boundary on each side the bluff descended precipitously towards the town. There was likewise a declivity behind the compound, so that it was also in a very good defensive position, in case of a riot amongst the Japanese, and a possible attack on the part of marauders, endeavouring to profit by it. There was a flag-staff from which the Red Ensign was always flying, and a battery of small guns that were occasionally fired in salute, somewhat to the disgust and annoyance of the Japanese Governor.

A few days afterwards, with the other senior officers, I accompanied the Captain upon an official visit to the said Governor. He was an officer of the Tycoon, as Nagasaki, being an Imperial city, though naturally within the domains of another great Daimio, was under the rule of the Mikado's Lieutenant, the appointment of the Governor being in his hands. His residence, just an ordinary Japanese house of somewhat larger dimensions than most of them, was not very far from the Islet of Decima, where we landed and found the Consul, Mr. Flowers, with Lowder the

Assistant, waiting for us. We were received at the gate of the "yashiki" (residence) by a group of two-sworded gentry, and conducted with much ceremony across the courtyard to where the Governor, a tall, rather nice-looking young fellow, of about thirty-five years of age, stood surrounded by his suite. Here we were ceremoniously introduced, one by one, by the Consul, the Governor bowing courtcously in acknowledgment of our salutes, and were then ushered into a room bare of all furniture save a long, deal table with a number of rough-looking chairs, of native manufacture, in imitation of the European article, and the usual thick matting. The chairs had been placed round the table, and the Governor, seating himself at one end, and placing the Consul on one side of him and the Captain on the other, signed to us to take our places, which we did, all of us on the one side, with the Japanese officials facing us. Smoking was at once started. A little "shehashi" with its diminutive charcoal pan, tobacco receptacle and pipe-rack, was placed before each of us, and we set to work, copying the example of our hosts. An animated conversation was carried on between the Captain and the Governor, through Flowers, the Consul, whilst we essayed with the help of Lowder to get as much information as we could out of the Jappies on the other side of the table. The Governor talked about European customs, and guns and rifles, with the Captain; our friends on the other hand, evidently fighting shy of talking about themselves, replied to all inquiries with nothing but amiable grins and questions about recent inventions. The only amusing incident about the business was the sudden break of the Governor with a little joke of his own. "Inventions!" he cried, "European inventions! What are they compared to Japanese? One of my officers over there," pointing to a rather obese little Samurai, he said, "has invented a patent for increasing

the population at a very rapid rate. He has already added twelve sons to his own family." He ended with a hearty laugh, in which we all felt constrained to join, so funny did the poor fellow look in his blushing confusion, under the raillery of his comrades.

The Governor, who had only arrived from Yedo a few months previously, had been allowed to bring his wife with him. She was a lady of high degree, and as such was kept rather secluded from the vulgar gaze, in accordance with ancient custom. It was a very great innovation, this permission for the wife of a Governor of an Imperial city, at the other end of the Empire, to accompany her lord, as a wife hitherto had always been detained in Yedo as a hostage for the Governor's loyalty. This ruler of Nagasaki, whilst enjoying the privilege, evidently thought he must walk warily about it. Mrs. Lowder wanted very much to make the acquaintance of the august lady in question, and Lowder tried very hard to obtain the consent of the Governor to his bringing her one day to be presented to her. His Japanese Lordship was very sorry. It could not possibly be done without an application to Yedo for the will of the Tycoon on the subject. It would require a long time to receive an answer which would in all probability be a refusal. That was all that could be got out of him, so Mrs. Lowder's curiosity had to remain unsatisfied.

We remained at Nagasaki until the end of the third week in June, about three months altogether, and what jolly happy months they were. I practically lived on shore most of the time. One of the jolliest dinners I remember was the Bachelor dinner at the Bluff bungalow, a few nights before Alec Glover was married. It was the very first Christian marriage that took place in Japan since the days when Christianity was banned, and the country closed to the foreigner. I will spare the reader all account of the songs and speeches of that merry entertainment, but I must

mention one amusingly funny picture of one of its incidents, which will always dwell in my memory. It is that of the very benevolent look upon the face of one of those present, whose position entitled him to the greatest respect, as he stood up smiling genially upon the company, exhorting all the rest of the bachelors present to follow Glover's example. There he stood, beaming upon us, bubbling over with good temper, whilst a fellow-guest was busy filling his coat-tail pockets with lobster claws and other debris of the feast, and another was peppering his bald pate, to put, as he afterwards said, more spice into his language, while he was utterly unconscious the whole time of what was going on. The wedding took place on May 30th and was performed by the Chaplain of the *Scylla*, the Rev. J. Lloyd, the vessel having arrived, to the great joy of the bridal party, who had been long waiting in suspense. The Flagship of the Russian Admiral \* which had also just arrived lent its band.

We had several nice rides and picnics before we left Nagasaki. One special picnic was at the invitation of the beef contractor, a good fellow, by the name of Adams. We rode over rocky paths, upon straw-shod ponies, to a large fishing-village, called Tokieto, on the shores of a wide-spreading land-locked bay, situated miles away to the westward of Nagasaki, and its fiord-like Gulf. It is a lovely lake-like sheet of water, with several islets in it, and jutting promontories covered with foliage. We spent the best part of the day there, and were entertained by a very clever band of strolling jugglers and acrobats. We saw many wonderful balancing feats, and that pretty trick with the paper butterflies. I also had two very interesting cruises in "unknown waters." The one was in the *Cormorant*. It was

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\* Admiral Rein, who served against us in the Crimean War and was in command of the *Malakoff* when it was stormed.

taken to enable us to spend our quarterly allowance of ammunition in target practice. We cruised under sail and she proved a very handy ship, manœuvring easily. We started from Nagasaki, followed by a European built vessel, under the Ensign of the Rising Sun ; she was a small barque called the *Dolphin*, which a Japanese Prince had recently purchased, and this was the first time she had been got under way. The self-confidence of the Japs was amazing. The *Dolphin* followed us down the Gulf all right, with the wind aft as it was, and she kept company with us until we got well outside. Then when manœuvring commenced, they soon found the measure of their capacity, and it was very amusing to us to watch their many attempts to alter their course by tacking, as we had done. Seven times they essayed in vain to get her round through the wind's eye, and then they gave it up, and veered her right round before it. When we saw her last, she was sailing away for the entrance of the Gulf she had left. We dropped a target off Cape Nemo and made very good practice, firing at it at varying ranges, sailing round it. We had a little bit of excitement over the business, as some enterprising Japanese fishermen endeavoured to carry off our target, and only abandoned it on our rifles dropping bullets all round them. We were away mostly in uncharted waters altogether five days, one of which we spent in the inlet, and another in Kabesina Bay.

A few days after our return to anchorage, and when the ship had been properly cleaned up again, an intimation was given to the Governor of Nagasaki that Captain Broad would be very pleased to receive His Excellency on board the *Cormorant*. A day was fixed for this return visit, and the Governor came off in a sort of State barge, followed by several other boats, with Yakonins sitting in their stern sheets. Over each boat floated the Imperial Ensign of Japan, at the after-part, whilst at the



bows were displayed banners and pennants, bearing the insignia that denoted the rank and position of the occupants of the seats of honour. The "yards" and the sides were manned, and as the Governor stepped over the gangway he was received with customary honours due to his high rank. Both the Consul and his Assistant were there, and after a walk round the deck and a little inspection of our armament, Captain Broad, with Flowers, led the way below to his cabin. I had been invited, with Singleton our First Lieutenant, to join the party, so we led off the rest. Light refreshments were offered, which our visitors seemed to enjoy, especially the good champagne that was served to wash down the sandwiches and cakes, and His Excellency and suite got quite jolly. The Governor brought out one of his broad jokes, after looking at the portraits of the Captain's wife and children, but this time it was at the expense of poor Flowers, the Consul, who had never married, and was popularly supposed to have a distaste for matrimony.

It was about this time that I acquired a great reputation for successfully doing what no one else would essay—rigging "sheer-legs" on the slight, composite-built brig *Fusiyama*, and disembarking two enormous steam boilers for a Japanese merchant Godi who was acting for various Daimios. As a result I subsequently received overtures from Godi to enter the service of Prince Satsuma, as his Naval adviser, at Kagoshima, while Messrs. Glover & Co., the consignees, presented me with a handsome pair of Japanese swords and a letter of thanks.

My second cruise in unknown waters whilst the *Cormorant* was still stationed at Nagasaki, was upon very different lines to the first. On this occasion—a holiday cruise—I was not only the navigator but the Captain as well, *pro tem.* in command of a scratch crew and a very handy little twin-screw steamer, called

the *Ottentosama* (the Rising Sun), like the small yacht of the Tycoon. We started further to investigate the fine inlet on the West coast of Amakusa, and steam round the island into the Gulf of Shimabara. The usual channel for passage in and out of the Gulf is round the north end of Pappenberg. There is, however, a southern channel between a small island, called Koyaki, and the mainland, about the entrance. It was a somewhat intricate passage, and had only once been made use of by a foreign ship. It was the dispatch gun-vessel *Renard* which entered by mistake, and very narrowly escaped piling herself up on one of the many reefs that lie on each side of the channel. As I was in such a handy little light-draft craft, I thought I would take that route for reaching the open sea, and running a certain amount of risk I succeeded. We entered the inlet of Kame-ura, and greatly startled the inhabitants of a pretty village at the head of a somewhat narrow arm of the lake-like harbour. They told us that ours was the first steamship they had ever seen, and the largest vessel, as nothing bigger than a junk had ever entered Kame-ura. It was much the same on approaching a large-sized town on the coast of Kiusin. Our appearance created the greatest excitement amongst the inhabitants, who had never seen a European ship before, to say nothing of one with a fire-eating monster on board, and but very few of them had ever seen a European. The Gulf of Shimabara by which we returned had a bad reputation with Japanese seamen in those days. It was full of whirlpools, as I was told by the Governor of Himaga. We certainly passed through several "races" and overfalls on our way across it to the shores of Nagasaki.

A day or two after our return in the *Ottentosama*, the Prince of Eizen, the Daimio within whose province stands the Imperial city Nagasaki, arrived on a visit. He came in a screw steamer,

carrying six guns, a merchant vessel he had purchased and with foreign aid had equipped as a ship of war. He had come to see his latest acquisition, a vessel called the *Carthage*, on which had been installed the new boilers to which I have referred, a task which perhaps my advice on this occasion had facilitated. The boilers, once on board, were properly fitted with the aid of the Dutch engineer employed in a factory at Nagasaki, and when all was complete, and ready for a trial at sea, I was invited the following Sunday with several other guests, leading merchants and Japanese officials, for a trip outside the Gulf. Everything went off very well. The Captain, an old Japanese friend, named Sanosan, handled his ship like an old salt, and nothing worse took place in the engine-room than a little leakage about sundry cocks which was speedily put right. A splendid lunch was provided, quite in European style, which we consumed outside the Gulf whilst the ship was manœuvred about in the trials of her engines and boilers. I left her in the evening, reflecting upon the progress made by the Japanese in a few years, and thinking how strange it was to remember that not so very long ago, their country was sealed to the rest of the world, and here was I now landing from a little cruise in a steamship, under the command of, and manned entirely by Japanese officers and men.

## CHAPTER XVIII

## PERILS OF UNCHARTED SEAS

It was not long before we were on the move again, this time for Yokohama, by way of the Inland Sea. At that time no surveying vessel as yet had been despatched to chart in Japanese waters the dangers lying in wait for the unwary navigator outside what had become more or less a beaten track. We passed through the narrow Straits of Shimonoseki, not wider in some parts than half a mile, and entered the "Inland Sea" within twenty-four hours of leaving Nagasaki. The "Inland Sea" is the great expanse of water lying between the three great Islands of Japan, called respectively "Kiushiu," "Shikoku," and "Nippon." These Islands approaching and receding from each other, have divided it up into six large basins of smooth water, each of which bears a name ending in "nada" (a sea). They are connected the one with the other, by channels more or less narrow, thus forming as it were a chain of beautiful lakes, clustered with islets all covered with foliage and possessing numerous well-sheltered harbours and anchorages. Nothing is more delightful than a trip through these waters during the summer and autumn. There is possibly more beautiful and grander scenery in other parts of the world to be met with, but I have never seen anything myself more pleasing to the eye than the views of the Inland Sea. On the afternoon of the third day out from Nagasaki we entered the "Itsumi nada," the

last large expanse of the Inland Sea to which there are two outlets to the eastwards, the Straits of Osaka and the Naruto Passage. They are situated at the extreme ends of the Island of Awaji, the largest one in the Inland Sea, which, lying nearly north and south across the last "Nada," blocks it to such an extent, as to seriously interfere with the action of the tides. The tidal wave has to force its way through these two passages. The Northern Strait is quite wide in comparison with the other, which is only two "cables" across, not much more than a break, as it were, in the containing wall of rugged rocky reefs stretching right across between Shikoku and Awaji. The Naruto Passage had been examined by some officers of the gun-boat *Dove* and its features noted on the chart. The approaches were reported clear of danger and the channel very deep, and that junks sometimes passed through at the slack of the tides in clear weather during daylight, although it bore a very evil reputation with Japanese mariners on account of the many shipwrecks that had occurred in its vicinity and the loss of life that followed. I had studied the Chart, and as the passage appeared to me an easy matter, and its use would shorten our voyage by some thirty miles, I proposed to the Captain that we should take it instead of going all round Awaji.

Captain Broad having consented, we anchored for the night off a little fishing village in a well-sheltered cove just before sunset, and I went ashore to obtain some information as to the time of high water the following day. This, as far as I could make out from the answers I received, would be about two hours before noon, so, having made due allowance for the strength of the tide, we started after breakfast for the southern end of Awaji. I must confess that when this passage, held in such dread by the Japanese came into view, it looked so formidable

and so utterly different to what I had anticipated, that for a moment I hesitated to take the risk. But we were in rather a tight corner, the tide was still racing along at a speed equal to that of our own steaming, and it would have been most difficult for us to have held our own against it if I turned the ship round with the idea of taking the other route, giving up the advantage we had gained. No passage was discernible at first. The foaming breakers appeared to extend right across its whole width and from them emerged for one moment, to disappear the next, the ugly black heads of the tooth-shaped rocks of the reefs below. It was an awe-inspiring sight, but I knew the position of the channel exactly, and, standing on for the entrance, soon saw a small opening in the line of surf, the dark colour line of which showed the absence of breakers.

Then came the tussle with the rushing stream for the command of the vessel's course. As we approached nearer and nearer, the current got hold of her keel swaying her from side to side, and it became most difficult to keep her head in the right direction. These were the days before steam "steering gear" had been invented, and there was nothing but the hand wheel with the strong ropes of woven hide to move the rudder about, and no less than four stout A.B.'s, in addition to the Quartermaster, were required to steer her through these turbulent waters. It was most thrilling work, and I can only compare it to driving a four-in-hand down a crowded street in London. She would still keep turning in the wrong direction with the helm hard against it. Hanging for a second or so, back she would spring like a restive steed, and it would take all the speed of the men in turning the wheel to check her in time to keep her off the reefs on the other side.

Thus we went on in snake-like progress until the supreme

moment, when we shot through the passage and entered a nasty race, throwing up bubbles so large that, as they struck her sides, spray fell upon the deck over the "bulwarks." Breathing more freely, I looked back to see the Captain and our passenger, Mr. Harrison of Glover & Co., gazing with strained faces over the stern, where a wall of water was standing some four to five feet above the taffrail showing that we had shot over a sort of waterfall. I had worn an air of great confidence I hardly felt, and I did not ask any question as to what any of the others had thought about it, but Harrison said, "My dear Woods, had I known that you were going to take us through that Hell's Gate, I wouldn't have risked the £20,000 of the firm's money you have on board, to say nothing of my own life." Well may the Japan seamen call it the "Whirlpool." As we went through it the jagged rock that showed itself on either side, appeared so close that one might have thought either mass could have been touched with a "boat-hook."

It may be added that, when the Commander-in-Chief heard from our Captain an account of our passage through it, a "station order" was issued forbidding all ships of war to make use of the "Naruto Gateway" of the Inland Sea. I never heard of any other vessel going through it. It may have been done since then, but when I questioned my friend James on the subject, his answer was in the negative.

It was very pleasant to meet old friends at Yokohama and to take up the old life again for a time. Some six weeks after our arrival I paid another visit to Yedo and was one of a party who were entertained at a Japanese *déjeuner* by the Members of the Council of the Tycoon. The Duke d'Alençon had arrived in Japan, and Sir Harry Parkes, our Minister, was intending to present him to the Japanese Authorities and give His Royal

Highness an opportunity to see something of the Great Imperial City. To assist in making an imposing appearance, the Admiral provided a fitting Naval escort—the *Princess Royal*, the Flagship, followed by the *Cormorant*, the *Salamis*, and the gun-boat *Bustard*. The Flagship had to anchor a long way out, but we got within three-quarters of a mile of the shore.

The Prince and the Admiral took up their quarters ashore at the Legation. This was not the building in which Sir Rutherford Alcock was living when the Legation was attacked, but a larger and more commodious residence, situated much nearer the sea—in fact only separated from it by the great high-road, the “Tokaido,” and quite close to the official quarter. The visit to the Council was a most interesting affair, and a most unusual sight for the Yedo folk to see with their wondering eyes—a cavalcade of foreigners come dashing up to the Gateway of the Tycoon’s Castle. It duly impressed them, as was intended. Sir Harry Parkes with the Duc d’Alençon and the Admiral and their respecting suites all in uniform with their gold lace glistening in the sun, and the red pennons of the lances of His Excellency’s body guard fluttering in the wind, made a very pretty picture. The Imperial Castle has of course been visited many times by Foreign visitors since those days, but up to the time of this visit Yedo was still the closed city it was when I rode through its streets with Sir Rutherford Alcock. The name of Yedo indeed passed away many years ago, and it is only known to the present generation as Tokio.

We met with a most courteous welcome from the three principal Heads of the Tycoon’s Council, all noblemen of high rank, and sat down to a Japanese *déjeuner* at which we ate of strange food with cups of saki and very sweet champagne, which apparently the Japanese in those days thought was the usual





THE NARUTO PASSAGE  
 (BY A JAPANESE ARTIST)

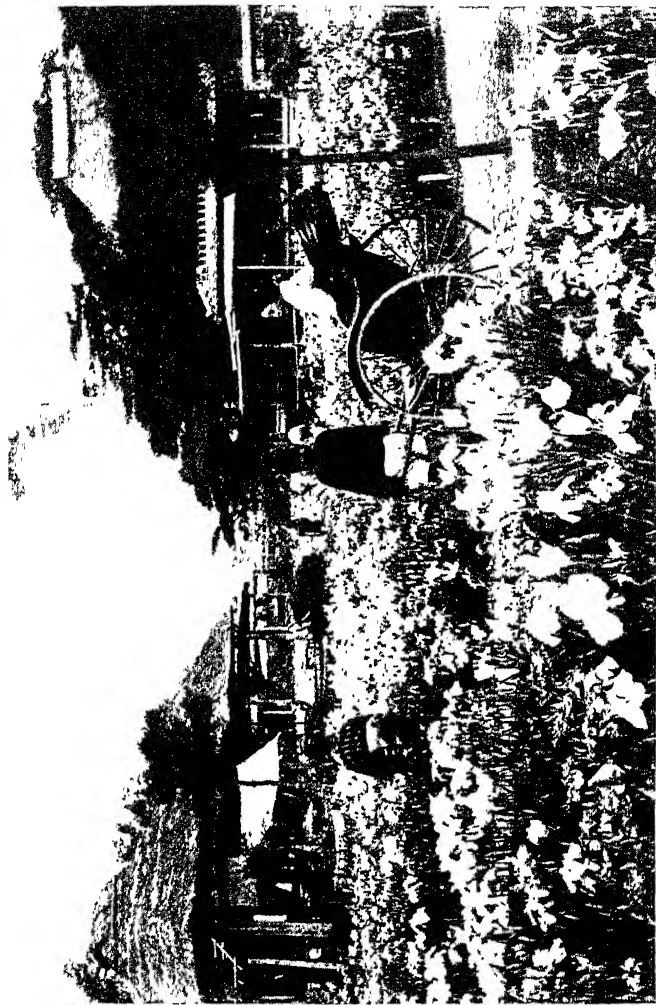


beverage of the "tojin samurais." We were served by youthful well-dressed pages, all wearing in their girdles the two swords denoting their position as samurais.

Small miniature dishes were placed before us each containing little pieces of food which we were expected to take up with chopsticks, dip into the little bowl of "soy" (Japanese sauce) and then eat with a mouthful of cold rice shovelled up from a larger one alongside. What the contents of those little saucer-dishes were it would be difficult for me to say. I know that I sampled them all as in duty bound, finding two or three not at all bad, others very queer to the taste and some rather objectionable to my uneducated palate. We smoked little pipes, which we prepared ourselves from the "shehashi" (smoking boxes) placed before each one of us, and chatted away with our hosts on the other side of the table. They hobnobbed with us European fashion, one jovial old gentleman rising and coming round to fill our drinking bowls with champagne as the occasion seemed to require, and we spent a very pleasant three hours and more. The entertainment was a great honour as my "stable companion" Willis of the Legation explained to me. We were served with the "sumptuary tea," a special preparation of the "tea shrub" reserved entirely for the use of the Mikado, the Tycoon, and the great Daimios. I was told by Willis that there was a special ritual observed in the preparation of the beverage, and that I must drink it as it would be an event to remember in the future. It is not to be found anywhere on sale, and is not procurable from any of those privileged to possess it. I do not know whether it still exists in Japan or not, but it was a sack-coloured liquid like a thick soup, and seemed to me to be nothing more than the concentrated essence of green tea, though I was given to understand that the tea blossoms had something to do with it.

We left with courteous bowing on all sides, and the permission of the Tycoon for all the party to visit the Imperial Gardens the next day, as was announced to Sir Harry Parkes by the Chief of the Council with his last "sayonara" (good-bye). We had a most delightful ride back to the Legation in the cool of the evening. We went by a different route to the short cut Captain Buller of the *Salamis* and I had taken to reach the Castle. It was dark when we started, and it was a pretty sight to see the streets well lighted up with the many lanterns of variegated colour and design, full too with an animated crowd of all sorts of people moving about bent upon business or pleasure. In one street through which we passed, was a row of little cooking stalls at which the vendors, with one eye upon their little stoves and the other looking towards hesitating passers-by, stood extolling in loud tones the excellence of their respective dishes. In a large square we passed through, also thronged with a moving crowd, were rows of benches round its sides, upon which sat the customers, who were being served from the little tea and refreshment shops behind. There they sat quietly smoking their little pipes, and drinking cups of tea and saki, until the sound of approaching horses roused them from their pleasant occupation. Up they jumped to turn and gaze, like the crowds in the other streets, upon the "tojins" dashing past in such glittering array, a sight so beyond the ordinary for them. As we stopped at the Legation Gate the moon burst through the clouds, and shedding the splendour of its rays over the still waters of the bay, and lighting up the quaint forms of the native sailing vessels, the forts and our ships of war, presented to our eyes such a lovely picture as is seldom seen.

Tokio is as well known now as any great city of Europe, but the tourist of the present day will never see such pictures of



IRIS GARDEN IN HORIKIRI, YEDO.



Yedo as we saw. It has not been possible for any visitor to the capital of the Mikado's Empire to do so for a good many years past on account of the great changes that followed the destruction of the Feudal system. No "top-hat" was seen in the streets in those days, surmounting a native costume ending in a pair of white or patent leather shoes, and no "kimono-jacket" over a pair of European trousers. It was still the Feudal Age with the Japanese, and the only changes to be noticed were in the arms and dress of the Tycoon's soldiers. I can see in memory, at the present moment, the quaint appearance of the large squad of Japanese Infantry, marching along the Tokaido, a month or so before I finally left the country. Armour and flowing robes had been discarded, and they were all in a khaki coloured kind of uniform with tight-fitting breeches, covered with strapping to the knees, puttee-fashion, and short tunic-shaped jackets. In the head-dress, however, the spirit of their innate conservatism came out most strongly. It was the hat of the "Yakonin," the round, flat, dish-shaped hat of solid papier mâché as hard as wood, covered with black highly-polished lacquer, bearing the "Armorial insignia" of the Tycoon in gold relief.

The next day after our visit to the Council we went to the Imperial Gardens. We travelled in boats, pulling along the northern shore for about three miles until we found a "landing place." We were received with much friendly courtesy by the officials in charge, and were shown the Imperial Pavilion to which the Tycoon, as we were told, frequently came with some of his favourite ladies, to fish in the large pond always kept well stocked with fish. We spent about two hours walking about the grounds, and were served in the Pavilion with fruit and champagne. Returning on board we weighed anchor, and, in obedience to

the Admiral's orders, conveyed Sir Harry Parkes and the Duc d'Alençon back to Yokohama.

The *Barossa* had arrived from China, and her commission having nearly expired was proceeding home to pay off. I had been nearly six years away on foreign service, and there were still examinations for me to pass, before I could receive any permanent promotion, so I went to consult my friend the Admiral's Secretary. It was important for me to get a passage in the *Barossa* if I could. He kindly promised to arrange it for me with the Chief, and having sent in my written application through Captain Broad, found myself superseded the following day by an officer of the Flagship. I was ordered, however, to take the *Cormorant* through the Inland Sea and down to Amoy, where Neville, my successor, would join the ship. A few days more spent in visiting friends and paying farewells, and I said good-bye to Japan though not for good and all as I thought at the time, as I had ideas of getting long leave upon half-pay when I had passed all my examinations, and returning to Japan to seek temporary service with one or other of the great Daimios.

At Sintama, Captain Broad, a guest named Grubble whom he was taking to Amoy and myself went ashore for a walk. The Japanese officials who had come off to the ship and been entertained to rum and water, a beverage they much enjoyed, were apparently friendly to the idea of our landing until they found that we really intended to do so. They then hastened ashore in their boats also. When we approached the shore we found a great crowd determined to oppose our setting foot on it. As we neared land, the guns of a battery "en barbette" were turned upon us and a large body of most picturesque soldiery came rushing down to the water's edge, and shouldering the crowd of civilians out of the way, lined up to prevent our stepping



ashore just as the stem took the ground and we stood in readiness to spring out of the gig. The boats with our visitors, thanks to the lusty strokes of their crews, had caught us up and reached the shore, and one of the officers urged us entreatingly not to move out of the boats until he had spoken to the officer in command. In the meantime we were joined by the second gig with the Doctor and Paymaster.

There we stood in face of the hostile soldiery, such a motley crowd in such a variety of costumes and with such a contrast of weapons, but all very fine stalwart looking fellows, no men in buckram, but good fighting men. Some of them were in half armour, holding long spears in their hands, whilst others carried "matchlocks" and "Enfield rifles." Again there were some in the full trappings of ancient days, wearing strings of small steel plates and woven chains to guard the legs and body and carrying nought in the way of arms but "bows and arrows."

In a few minutes the negotiator returned with a negative. The Governor of the town dare not give us permission to land for fear of some terrible accident. There were discontented people about as well as spies of Prince Chosin, who might seize the opportunity to assassinate one or more of us in order to embroil the Tycoon with our Government, as in the case of Satsuma. It was plausible enough in its way, but "wouldn't wash," considering the number of loyal soldiers he had at his command, who could easily guard five foreigners on a very short visit. The offer was again made, that if only we would go back to the ship, any supplies we required would be sent off at once. Captain Broad was determined, however, to have his way if he could, and, declining the offer, remained standing near me at the bows. I told the officer that the Captain would not leave until his wish had been gratified and he had seen the town. Much useless

discussion ensued, and then just as our Skipper was getting tired of the situation and about to give it up, Japanese obstinacy gave way, and we were allowed to land. It was my last appeal which did it. I had pointed out the great difference between our reception of them and the treatment they were showing us. The soldiers suddenly opened their ranks, and we stepped ashore to be escorted through the principal street of the neatly-paved town consisting of the usual Japanese houses and shops. We were accompanied by a large body of "yakonins," who took great care to allow none of the great crowds of spectators, who everywhere assembled to have a peep at the "tojins," to approach us.

The desire having been expressed to the chief of our escort that we might be permitted to see the Governor and thank him for his courtesy, we were ushered into his presence. He was a fine-looking old gentleman well up in years, richly dressed in silken robes, wearing a wickerwork hat of the flat-dish pattern. Our Captain having asked in thanking him for the honour he had done us whether there was anything he could do for him in return, replied that he would like a letter to be taken to the Governor of Nagasaki. Captain Broad naturally agreed, and shaking hands in token of friendship as I explained to him, we parted on the best of terms. The letter was written and sent off to the ship with an ample supply of eggs, fish and fowls as a present from the Governor.

The next morning we weighed at daylight and entered the Straits of Shimonoseki at about four o'clock in the afternoon. Passing through we saw much evidence of the great struggle going on between Chosin and the Tycoon. The former seemed to be getting the best of it, and in the end he and his allies, after I had finally given up all idea of going back to Japan, managed to bring the "Tycoonate" to an end. We anchored nowhere,

but pushed on well through the night, and daylight found ourselves about four miles off the entrance to the Spex Straits.

Here we had a tremendous struggle with the tide. One great difficulty for the Navigator in Japanese waters in those days was the non-existence of any data for calculating the time of high and low water. I generally managed to pick up some idea upon the subject before trying an unknown passage by questioning the local fishermen. On this occasion, having already gone through Spex Straits, I was not anxious on the matter. There were no such rapids as we had encountered in passing through some of the openings from the one "Nada" of the Inland Sea into another, as the "bottom" of this channel was pretty even throughout its length. Yet on a previous occasion there was a very narrow one we went through, so full of turbulent, billowy, bubbling water that the ship was lifted up and tossed about, and her head so swung round from side to side that, but for the rapid passing of the land, we might have thought ourselves perched upon and revolving round a pinnacle rock. I found, however, when we had got well inside the Straits and turned an awkward bend, a most unpleasant surprise. The ebb-tide was running with such strength that the *Cormorant*, even with her ten knots full speed, could barely stem it. It was an awkward position because, upon entering this bend, we had brought a sunken rock that we had passed almost immediately astern of us at not much more than a cable's distance. I knew exactly where it was, and I would fain have brought the ship to anchor, and waited for the slack water at the change of tide, but for risk of the cable carrying away and thus rendering the situation worse than it was. It was impossible to turn the vessel, so I kept her hammering at it, calling down the "voice-pipe" to

fire up and give her all the steam they possibly could. After a few minutes of anxious suspense, with the ship not gaining an inch upon the rushing tide, she gradually began to draw ahead, and I soon had the satisfaction of seeing the land go past once more. It took us an hour and three-quarters to get through, just double the time taken when we were going the other way.

Outside, a long way astern, we caught sight of the *Adventure*, which, bound for Nagasaki, had passed us two or three days before. Surprised to see us so well ahead of them, the enquiry came by distance signalling. "Did you come through Spex Straits?" to which our Captain, in his elation at having beaten the *Adventure* on this voyage to Nagasaki, replied, "Specs we did." We reached our anchorage just two hours before the Admiral.

On going ashore, I found that Glover had a proposal to make to me on the part of the Prince of Satsuma's Agent. It was to take charge of a few of Satsuma's officers during their voyage to England, make arrangements for their learning English and navigation, and then return at once to Japan to take up, at Kagoshima, the position of Naval Adviser to the Prince. It was a very flattering proposal, but unfortunately it was one I could not accept just then, as I was not free to leave the *Cormorant* before my relief had arrived and had taken over the charge of my duties. He recommended me to see Godi, the Agent, at once, and explain the position to him, as he thought it highly probable that he would offer to make another arrangement with me for securing my services later on. I followed his advice, had a long chat with Godi, and when I left Nagasaki two days later, I carried in my pocket a "pro-forma" Contract in Japanese writing to enter Prince Satsuma's service for three years, to date from the day of my return to Japan from England.

We made the voyage to Amoy in five days under sail the whole

way, save for the little steaming required to take us out of the Gulf to an offing and into the inner harbour at Amoy.

On September 22nd I dined with my Captain for the last time. He was one of the best fellows I ever came across in the Service, and I could not help showing all the respect and affection for him in my farewell speech of thanks for the toast to my health and good-luck which had been drunk at his proposal. The next morning I took my traps on board the *Perseus*. We sailed that same afternoon, and with a last adieu waved from the bridge as we rounded the Island Point of the Inner Harbour, the dear old *Cormorant*, on board of which I had spent so many happy days, passed out of my view. I might have said for ever, but for the fact that I saw her again in July, 1919, fifty-three years afterwards, as a store-hulk, moored in the Harbour of Gibraltar.

## CHAPTER XIX

## HOMEWARD BOUND ROUND THE CAPE

WE had light winds and it took the *Perseus* so long to reach Hong Kong that the first news I received when I went on board the old *Princess Charlotte*, the guardship, was that the *Barossa* had already sailed, and that I should have to wait for some other vessel. Fortunately, however, upon the matter being referred to the good old Admiral George King, not then Sir George as he subsequently became, I was sent on to Singapore as a passenger on board the P.O. Mail Steamer *Baroda*.

At Singapore, after a very pleasant trip, we arrived before the *Barossa*, and I transferred and awaited her. There were a good many in the mess as there was an additional Acting Lieutenant, a foreign officer permitted to serve in the British Navy for a time in order to pick up the training. His name was Egeberg, son of a Norwegian Banker, and a very nice gentlemanly fellow. There was also another Master going home as a passenger, so that altogether there were fourteen of us. It was a large number to serve at table, but I had brought my smart young China boy with me. He was what they called a "chung-mow," and was one of four small boys found in a village near Shanghai when the "Tai-ping" rebels came down to attack that wealthy Chinese trading city, and were driven back by our Naval Brigade under Sir James Hope. These four boys were taken on board the flagship, created officers' page-boys in training for service,

and were made Christians by the Bishop of Hong Kong. My boy was christened George Eurylano. He had fallen into the hands of a Belgian at Yokohama, having been swapped by his former master for an older and stronger boy. He was badly treated by this Belgian and came off and appealed to me, and I took him under my protection and put him into sailor's rig. I was charged at the Consulate with his abduction, but I quoted the "Slave Laws" and successfully pleaded that as he was not the China boy who had been brought over by the plaintiff, the latter had no lien upon him for his passage money. So with his own consent he was bound over to me until he was old enough to look after himself, and he was so quick in table attendance, dodging in and out and between the legs of the other servants, that I was never very long in getting my share of whatever was going.

In crossing the Javanese Sea, on the way to Angier Road, the great port of call for homeward-bound sailing-vessels in those days, we saw, one forenoon, an enormous water serpent passing over the channel between two islands, just as we were emerging from it. It must have been nearly fifty feet long and as thick in width as the largest of our coir hawsers. It was holding its head some two feet or so above water and moving at a rapid rate.

After steaming for another twenty-four hours upon leaving Java we struck the S.E. Trades, stopped engines, made all plain sail, and hoisted up the propeller. The next morning we were running before a steady fair wind making ten knots an hour. Following the example of the China clippers, we always set all possible sail, and it was a glorious sight at times to see all this canvas spread together, though it made officers of the watch feel a bit anxious occasionally as to the strength of the light upper gear.

At Mauritius, which we reached on the morning of October 26th, we found a corvette under the Turkish Flag, a very smart-looking craft, and shortly after we had anchored an officer from her came on board in a cutter to present to our Captain the compliments and good wishes of her Commander. He was wearing the same uniform as our Lieutenants and, except for the small shoulder-straps and red cap, might easily have passed for one, as he spoke English so perfectly. I had a little chat with him at the "gangway" as he waited for his visit to be announced to the Captain and learnt from him that his ship was called the *Broussa*, strangely like that of our own, as he pronounced it. He told me also that he had been for some time in England and had made a short cruise in one of our warships, and was now upon his way as Aide-de-camp to his Captain, who was proceeding to take up his command as Commodore of the Turkish squadron in the Persian Gulf, stationed at Basra. Within a year I met him again at Constantinople as Aide-de-camp to the Minister of Marine.

It was in the vicinity of Port St. Louis that Bernardin St. Pierre laid the scenes for that very pretty and romantic, but purely imaginary love-story, "Paul et Virginie," and many enquiring visitors to the island had gone away disappointed, until at last a very romantic Frenchman determined that no one in future should suffer such pangs as he had done at finding the beautiful story nothing but the fiction of a romancer's brain. So, at his own expense, he had two graves arranged with headstones and borders in the Botanical Gardens at Port Louis, to serve as Shrines for the homage of all worshippers of Love who might visit Mauritius on the quest. The graves were side by side and had headstones bearing suitable inscriptions. By this time they have probably disappeared, as when I saw them in



1866 they were already much dilapidated, every visitor with a romantic mind having thought it necessary apparently to carry away some little memento of the unfortunate lovers. I am afraid I sinned that way myself and walked away with a small store with a view to future distribution. It ran out at the Cape, but was easily replaced when required to meet a further demand later on from young ladies of the period. We had a very pleasant run to the Cape, with fair winds the whole time, and anchored in Simons Bay early in December. It was a Sunday, and in the afternoon I started off with the Major of Marines and the Padre upon a visit to Cape Town. We were told that the vessel would be leaving on Friday, so that we had just four clear days before us.

Into those four days I crowded as much as possible, finding here, as elsewhere, that the high spirits in the *Orontes*—which had taken out, under the new Admiralty scheme of recommissioning ships abroad, the first experimental crew—had left their traces everywhere—even a year afterwards. We were shown the two lions guarding the entrance to the fine avenue leading to the residence of the Governor, which some of these *Orontes*' passengers had slewed right round, massive pieces of sculpture as they were, so that instead of appearing to keep a watchful eye upon intruders without authority, there they stood in scornful attitude to the whole business, with their tails towards each other.

There were no railways then at the Cape, and one witnessed in Cape Town the now—so I am told—vanished spectacle of the great country wagons drawn by many pairs of stout oxen. I visited Farmer Peck's hostelry at Muizenberg—of doubtful reputation among Naval men—and by special invitation, though a relative stranger, I attended the marriage feast of a young German named Kirschblum, wedded to a Miss Tate. Kirschblum

was quite one of the good sort of Germans before Bismarck had made them bumpitious, and he had left Germany since he had joined in his youth in the rebellion against the autocratic rule of the King of Prussia. He had settled in Natal as a sheep-farmer, and subsequently did loyal service in the Boer War. All the relations of both families had gathered together, and though I was inveigled into proposing the health of the parents of the bride with nautical similes, I enjoyed myself immensely, and never did I attend a jollier party. It interested me very much during the Boer War to read names in the papers so familiar to me, but of those present at that wedding only one did I ever meet again. It was a Miss Cloete, who came to Constantinople with Dr. Sauer and his wife, the Rhodesian and friend of Cecil Rhodes, and brought a letter of introduction to me from Mr. Alfred Beit, the archi-millionaire.

We made a very quick run to St. Helena with all our "stunsails" set, but only remained there just forty hours. Still we made up a picnic party for a visit to Longwood and Diana's Peak, the loftiest point on the island. It was a very interesting ride and a jolly picnic, as we were joined by a few shore friends with ladies amongst them. There was a dinner at the Governor's that night, and the next morning we entertained the officers of the small garrison at luncheon in the "ward-room," and had some difficulty afterwards in getting them out of the ship, so great was their affectionate regard for us, and so loth were they to part company. The garrison was unusually large for such a small portion of the British Empire during the life of Napoleon, but it had been reduced to insignificant dimensions after his death, and there were but a few West Indian soldiers there at this time with only a Major in command, a Captain and a subaltern. I am afraid that their exuberant display of friendship and affection

was due to the wickedness of one of our young Lieutenants, who initiated them into the delights of cocktail drinking. They had never even heard of them before, so accepting his assurances that they were as mild as milk, and finding them much nicer than any other mixtures they had tried before as appetisers, they took so many that by the time they had finished their lunch and taken their coffee and liqueur, they were in the same jolly condition as our old friend Pickwick was at the Squire's luncheon-party, when he made the acquaintance of milk-punch for the first time. My last view of St. Helena embraced the picture of a forlorn, despairing group in an open boat drifting away from us. One of them was standing up with a companion holding him round the waist to prevent his slipping overboard, as with outstretched arms he implored us to take him on board again. Another had already collapsed entirely under the combined influence of the cocktails, etc., and the rocky motion of the boat, and I fear the others followed suit before they reached the shore.

We stopped at Ascension for a few hours, just to embark a few turtles and receive the mail-bags. Christmas Day found us in the Atlantic far from land and a good way off the Channel. Its eve was celebrated in the gun-room by an outburst of the most idiotic and foolish revelry imaginable ; it took the form of wrecking the entire contents of the room, including the table. Next day there was a jolly row. The Captain would not allow the disturbers to have any table rigged up for their Christmas dinner, so they had to eat it in the greatest discomfort as a punishment, besides having to pay for the Government property destroyed.

We soon reached Plymouth, a little over six years after I sailed from the port in the *Charybdis*, and proceeded to Portsmouth, where I was discharged to the old *Victory* and resumed

my former rank of Second Master. I passed my examinations with much success and was sure of my promotion when the next batches were made, which, according to all calculations, could not be far off as I was not very far from the top of the list. I was granted the usual leave after I had passed all my examinations, and was commencing to make preparations for my return to Japan in the near future—I had gone so far as to accept a very handsome offer made to me by Messrs. Dudgeon Bros., the Thames Shipbuilders, at the request of Tom Glover. It was to take out to Nagasaki a fine screw dispatch gun-vessel they were building to his order at the time ; she was to be completed in about three months, which just suited my book.

However, it was otherwise decreed by an overruling Providence, and I went to Turkey instead.

Yet Japan, as I knew it, possessed many attractions. Everyone as far as I could see and learn, was warmly clad, well housed, and had enough nourishing food. Everyone looked happy. Materials for the raiment of men and women were kept within narrow limits by Sumptuary Laws. The people were all divided into classes, as well as into clans, with the "Daimios" (Feudal Lords) at the top. They were all dependent upon one of the Daimios and their Feudatories to whom they owed service of one kind or another, and who were responsible for their welfare and their observance of the laws. In consequence of the Sumptuary Laws there was no object in amassing wealth, and there was no rivalry between neighbours, leading, in the desire to outshine each other, to the excessive expenditure which raises at times the envious regard and anger of the poor. The Daimios and "Hatomotos" answering to the Estated Knights and Esquires holding their land by Feudal tenure were at the top of the tree in the social scale, and next to them came the

“Samurai,” the Fighting Men and the Priests. After them, separated by a Gulf not easy to pass, stood the Professors, the Physicians and School Teachers. Then followed the artists, the painters, carvers and workers in metal, carpenters, builders, farmers and labourers. In those days the artist did not work for gain, but renown and the honour of his Chief and to have his name perpetuated upon his work. He did not manufacture for a market. All was hand work, and the artist put all his soul into it, producing masterpieces not to be found in the present day, except in museums and private collections. What an opportunity I lost during my first visit, through want of artistic knowledge and the money to make purchases ! \*

In winding up this first section of my memoirs, in which there is so much about old Japan and the Japanese, I wish to add a few words in answer to the reproaches which I have so often heard uttered against them. Their commercial honesty has been attacked and unfavourably compared to that of the Chinese—but whenever such comparisons have been drawn between the two races, in my hearing, I have pointed out that the Chinese from the earliest days were merchants and traders, and centuries ago had learnt that Honesty was the best policy, and to ensure fair dealings had instituted “Guarantee” Societies long before they had thought of them in Europe. Their goods were dealt with in the markets of Eastern Europe long before there was any direct trade with Europeans. On the other hand, the Japanese were a proud, warlike nation. Japan was a self-contained country in a very great measure, and trade and commerce as we understand and practise it was unknown to them.

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\* The most beautifully-chiselled bronze vases, richly inlaid with silver and gold, were purchasable there for 75/- to 90/-; nowadays £100 could not buy them.

They were indoctrinated in its mysteries at a period when the time-honoured rule was beginning to pass away under the pressure of competition in all countries. Not many years after Japan was opened to Foreign Trade, a new one as might be said was taking its place, "Do others, lest they should do you." The Japanese were done at the very outset, as they learned from Sir Rutherford Alcock when they came to him for advice as to how they were to stop the outward flow of their gold coinage.\*

There were adventurers of no commercial standing who found their way to Japan, and for some time did good business in exorbitant demands upon the Japanese Custom House for the large quantities of "Itzoboos" required for their extensive trade dealings that didn't exist. I am afraid the Japanese took these matters to heart as lessons in Foreign trade.

Then again I have heard them charged with ingratitude to their Foreign teachers—that once they had all that was to be got out of them, they were promptly set aside and forgotten. I do not know enough about it to express any decided opinion on the matter—but there is a grave near Oxted to which many visits are paid by Japanese in a sort of pilgrimage. It is that of the Great English Friend of Japan who rendered such good service to them and was a model of probity—Captain James, who sailed with Togo all over the Pacific as instructor to Japanese Naval Officers and subsequently reared their Maritime Shipping Companies into prosperity.

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\* Japan was first opened to Foreign intercourse by the Portuguese and Spanish in the sixteenth century. Then the Dutch came. Trade was carried on under rather restrictive conditions, but on the whole the Japanese were friendly. Then came the anti-Christian movement, the converts were killed and foreigners banished. The islands were closed to the Outer World from 1624 to 1854, when intercourse was re-established mainly as the result of American pressure, followed by our own.

## CHAPTER XX

## I ARRIVE AT CONSTANTINOPLE, 1867

It was on a chilly, depressing morning in the month of July when I first caught sight of Constantinople. The sky was completely overcast, and drizzling rain made everything look very dull and dreary. "Is this the sunny East?" I asked myself. "Can I have lost my way?" No; for there could be no mistake about the name of the great walled city we were approaching, with its seven hills crowded with the domes and lofty minarets of mosques and Eastern churches, and the crowd of shipping lying at anchor in the wide patch of water separating it from its twin-city, Scutari, standing upon the Asiatic shore.

So much has been written about the beauty of Constantinople and the Bosphorus that I will not trouble the reader with any account of my first impressions. I will only say that Constantinople should always be approached on a fine early morning in the middle of spring, when the sun is gilding the domes and minarets and playing upon the glass of the many-windowed houses on the sea-front and those near by. The Bosphorus at that time is also seen at its best, with all the Judas-trees in full blossom. I entered the harbour from the Marmora on many subsequent occasions, and never failed to appreciate its beauty. To those who have never seen Constantinople, I would strongly recommend the perusal of the best book, in my opinion, ever written about it. It is by the Italian author, Amici. It does not give the "dry bones" of its architectural remains, but

presents pictures of its past history, and reproduces scenes of unforgettable beauty.

I had left England rather against my will, but my appointment as Second-in-Command of the Dispatch vessel in attendance upon the Ambassador at Constantinople was very attractive, and life away from the Fleet ran upon pleasant lines—too pleasant in some respects, as the Captain was so very seldom on board, although unmarried, that I found it difficult to maintain discipline when as Commanding Officer my power was limited to the infliction of light sentences, and it was impossible to appeal to Higher Authority. The *Caradoc* having nothing but pole-masts, and no armament but a field-piece, there were no sails for drill and no big guns for exercise ; hence the men had little to do beyond what was necessary to keep the ship clean and spick and span as a yacht should always be, and they were allowed much leave on shore. Moreover, when the Embassy had gone into its summer quarters up the Bosphorus, the vessel was moored head and stern to the shore in Therapia Creek. Under such circumstances it is not difficult to understand how the liberty enjoyed in the Golden Horn passed at times into licence taken by the men when the call of the shore became too strong for resistance. Consequently leave-breaking became too frequent to be passed over with a wink, yet all I could do was to place the offender under a sort of open arrest, which kept him at work, but prevented his going on shore.

The *Caradoc*, I may mention, had a special history of her own. Originally built for the Holyhead Mail Service, she was at this time still one of the fastest steamers afloat. Having enormous paddle-wheels, and great " beam-engines " to drive them, she could, with a clean bottom, steam ten knots an hour. She was purchased for the Navy when the Crimean War took





CONSTANTINOPLE: THE BOSPHORUS NEAR THE ENTRANCE TO THE GOLDEN HORN.



place, was sent out to Constantinople for the service of the all-powerful British Ambassador, carried Lord Raglan and his Staff to the Crimea, and subsequently, after his death, conveyed his body to England. Commencing her career at Holyhead, she ended her days there, foundering in a great gale in the Irish Channel outside the harbour, after she had been sold out of the Service and was doing tramp-passenger and cargo work. When I reached Constantinople she was at Therapia, but as the Ship's Interpreter came to me with the news that one of the ferry-boats would shortly be leaving the "bridge" for that place, I hastened my preparations and got off at once. I was soon comfortably seated on the bridge-deck of a small paddle-wheel steamer, gazing down upon the animated scene in the harbour . . . caiques darting about in all directions, "mahoues" (lighters) under sail, lowering their masts with their long "lateen yards" as they approached the archways of the bridge spanning the harbour, and pulled and pushed their way into the Golden Horn. Queer-looking sailing-craft coming into harbour, built apparently on the model of a Dutch fisherman's wooden shoe, with swelling bows and high square sterns, reminded me very much of Chinese junks. There, however, their likeness to the latter ended, as they carried a "square topsail" upon their single mast, and sometimes a "top-gallant sail" as well. Besides these sails, these strangely-rigged sailing-vessels also carried balloon jibs and foresails, as well as an enormous "fore and aft mainsail" spread out by a long stout "spreet" extending from its lower inner clew (corner) to its upper outer one. The sail runs out upon a "jackstay" between the mast and the "spreet-end," for which purpose its "head-rope" is fitted with rings called "thimbles." Vessels of this build and rig are still constructed in Turkey, and are always very picturesque objects

in Levantine sea-scapes. Their rig, too, is a very good one for making a passage with anything like a fair wind, although the principles upon which their sails are cut and set are as far apart as the Antipodes from those which prevail in Western countries at the present day.

The journey took us over an hour, but I reached the ship just before luncheon, and having made acquaintance with all the officers save the Captain, who was ashore, I sat down to my first meal with my new mess-mates. There was our "Sawbones," an Assistant Surgeon; an Irishman, the "Purser"; an Assistant-Paymaster from the West Country, and a senior Master's Assistant of Scotch descent. They were all very good fellows, and one of them became a lifelong friend. This was James, the Master's Assistant, who, as Captain James, afterwards had a distinguished career in Japan. I am always glad to think that it was, in a great measure, my tales of Japan which induced him to take service under the Japanese Flag. He went out as a Navigation Instructor to the Imperial Cadets, and sailed all over the Pacific in command of the Japanese training-vessel with the celebrated Admiral Togo as one of the officers under his command. He was very much esteemed by the Japanese, as were all the members of his family, and he was trusted by them as few Europeans settled in Japan ever have been. Subsequently he was of such great assistance to the Japanese when they were starting a National Mercantile Marine that he became the General Manager of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha Company. Then, when at the end of some twenty years' service he wished to return home and enjoy the little fortune he had so well earned by his hard work and probity, he was begged by the Directors to open an office in London for the Company and direct its affairs on the offer of very handsome terms, which he accepted.

He died, I am sorry to say, a few years ago after a short illness. His widow and children, two daughters and a son, are amongst my closest friends. They are a talented family, the mother possessing much literary ability, while the daughters are pretty and charming as well as being clever. The one is now an Italian Marchesa, married to Don Henri Cavaletti of the Marchesi Cavaletti, one of the oldest families of Rome, while the other is a writer of prose and poetry of considerable merit. The son is an officer of distinction in the Royal Engineers; he served and suffered in the war, and now holds a post in North China.

Lunch was just over, and the Paymaster had gone on deck to smoke his pipe, when I heard him call out as he looked down the ward-room skylight, "She has come out." "Who?" I asked. "Oh, the tall girl, a Miss Photiadis," answered James. The other two ran on deck, and I saw their glasses levelled upon a tall graceful girl standing near the door of a house on the quay. She was, indeed, a beautiful girl, just the sort of "Maid of Athens," who inspired Byron to write his love-song. I found that while all my mess-mates were more or less admirers of her beauty, none had ventured to make her acquaintance.

This was a situation I found very difficult to understand, and after much bantering chaff I made a bet that within the next three weeks I would be upon speaking terms with the family and make the acquaintance of the object of their admiration. I did not see exactly at the time how this was to be managed, as I had not then a single friend or acquaintance in the whole of Turkey, to my knowledge, but I risked it.

However, an occasion did arise when Sultan Abdul Aziz, the father of the first Angora-appointed Caliph,\* returned from

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\* Since exiled, on the termination of the Caliphate (March, 1924).

his memorable visit to Western Europe, the first Sultan, and I may even say the first great Eastern Potentate, to do so. His welcome back was most enthusiastic, and gave rise to scenes of gorgeous splendour. Never out of Fairy-land was seen such brilliant illumination of earth and sky as that which, commencing on the night of his return, was carried on as a demonstration of joy for the two nights which followed. Never will a like display ever be seen again, for such a setting as the Bosphorus, with its creeks and promontories, and its terraced gardens, is not to be found elsewhere, and the enormous cost of such a pyrotechnic lavishness would be prohibitive. To defray the expenses of the Government over this and the State receptions, £300,000 was drawn from the Imperial Ottoman Bank. Ismail Pasha, then in the plenitude of his power and wealth as the Ruler of Egypt, spent £60,000 over his share of the illuminations at his Summer Palace at Emirghian. He had just been created Khedive of Egypt, and had managed to obtain a change in the Law of Succession, which would keep it in the direct line of his own descendants. It was a very great innovation, over which grey-bearded old Ulema Doctors of Koranic Law shook their heads. It violated the usages of custom which had decided that whilst property should pass from the father to the children, Power and Authority must pass upon the death or resignation of the Head of the Family to the eldest surviving male member of its whole living generation. The object of this was, of course, to provide against the Rule of the Household, or that of the State, from falling into the hands of a minor. This is why we have seen the Sultanate of Turkey jump from an uncle to a nephew, and then to a brother, with a cousin of the present ex-Sultan as Heir-Apparent,

Abdul Aziz was, by the way, credited with the desire to assure the succession, the Throne of Othman and the Caliphate,

to his own son, Prince Yussuf Izzedin, and this was a potent factor in enabling Ismail Pasha to secure the realisation of his ambitious scheme. It cost him, however, a very large sum of money, and Abdul Aziz was balked of his intention to use this great innovation as a precedent in favour of his son by the strenuous opposition of the two great ruling statesmen, Ali and Fuad Pashas. He tried hard to break down their opposition, and in the end they had to tell him, knowing well the feeling of the Ulemas, that it would cost him his Empire to proclaim Yussuf Izzedin the "vehliyat" (successor) to the Throne.

Following Ismail's example, the other Pashas and high Civil Functionaries were equally lavish in their display of loyalty, according to their means. The Sultan had travelled overland to Varna, and embarked on board his fine large yacht, the *Sultanieh*, and entered the Bosphorus on a clear fine summer's day, escorted by the yachts of the Ambassadors who had gone out into the Black Sea to receive him. The entrance forts had fired their salutes, and the booming of heavy guns continued as we passed each headland, and its crowning fort took up the joyous chorus of sound. We heard the loud shouts of "Padisha Choke Yasha" at intervals, and as the smoke cleared away here and there we saw the great crowds assembled at every vantage point along the shore to welcome back their Sovereign Lord.

That night there was to be a great reception held by the Grand Vizier, in the name of the Sultan, in his spacious "Konak" at Bebek, to which all members of the Foreign Embassies and Legations were invited, as well as the Officers of the "Stationnaires," as the Embassy yachts were called. Many Turkish Military and Civil Functionaries and leading members of the Foreign Communities were also asked to the fête. Here I saw my opportunity. I knew that the brother-in-law of Miss

Photiadis, the tall girl as my mess-mates called her, was Fenely Bey, a Turkish functionary of rank, and would be going to the ball, so I sent a very politely-worded invitation, offering him a passage to Bebek on the *Caradoc*, for himself and any members of his family who might be accompanying him. I mentioned that if he cared to accept the offer a boat would be sent to the quay for him at 8 p.m. The reply came, thanking me profusely, and saying that he would be glad to accept. I was jubilant. In my own thoughts I had won the bet, for how could I suppose that a young lady old enough to have been out in society for at least two or three years was going to be left out of such a brilliant show? Yet such was the case. There was a worrying time of suspense spent in watching the movements of the "beauteous damsel," who kept actively moving about, coming out of the house to chat with a passer-by and then going in, but only to run out again for a little conversation with someone in the next residence. As the time passed, my jubilation slowly ebbed away, for though she retired at last to reappear no more, I could hardly believe there was time for her to dress for the ball. However, I had to send the boat in, and it was not easy to stand the jeers and chaff of my mess-mates over my failure when it came back, with Fenely Bey and his somewhat buxom wife as the only occupants. I had just time for a few minutes' chat, and then I had to leave them to the care of my mess-mates and take charge on the bridge. The Embassy Party came on board, and we cast off from the buoy at once and proceeded out of the little bay. It was rather ticklish work piloting the *Caradoc* down the Bosphorus to Bebek with its whole width and length pretty well covered with craft of all sorts moving about in all directions, and all gaily illuminated with coloured lanterns. There seemed to be present everything that could possibly float



on the waters that night, from ferry-boats to caiques of all sizes, including the large Village Carriers (Bazaar caiques) and fishing craft. All were full of spectators and gaily illuminated with lanterns of all sorts and colours. The brilliancy of the illuminations, the white lights varied here and there with red and green, rendered it difficult to distinguish the bluff headlands from the shore-line, so that a very sharp look-out was required, as well as much fine steering, to avoid colliding either with the shore or one of the many craft in movement.

I managed, however, to get through the net-work of floating encumbrances without running anything down, but it was a great relief to me when I had got the ship safely into Bebek Bay.

I landed with my guests, and getting separated in the crowd at the entrance, I saw no more of them that night. I can't say that the ball was very enjoyable. It was a very warm night, and lashed up in full dress one did not feel very comfortable. But the function was interesting, and I made the acquaintance of many people of note, being presented to Ali and Fuad Pashas, and also to Ismail the Khedive.

## CHAPTER XXI

## THE TWO LAST GREAT STATESMEN OF TURKEY

ALI and Fuad Pashas were the last great statesmen of Turkey who eventually ruled the Empire after the death of the Sultan Mahmoud II. the Reformer, through their influence over his successor, Abdul Mejid the Gentle. The esteem in which these two eminent personages were held by that Monarch, and the confidence that he placed in their wisdom, kept them in power during the reign of his successor, Abdul Aziz, until their deaths. They were the heads and the masters of every Turkish Ministry which was formed, always holding between them the seals of the "Grand Vizierate" and Office of Foreign Affairs. They were friends bound together by a common policy, the gradual introduction of progressive reforms and maintenance of British friendship. A favourite saying of Fuad Pasha was, "*Islam a été pendant des siècles, dans son milieu un merveilleux instrument de progrès. Aujourd'hui, c'est une horloge attardie qu'il s'agit de remettre à l'heure*" ("Islam through many centuries has in itself been a marvellous instrument of progress. To-day it is a clock which has lost time, and it is essential to put it at the right hour").

Changes of Ministry occasionally took place, for Abdul Aziz liked to shuffle the official cards from time to time, and the event would be duly announced by a Proclamation published in the local papers, with a literary flourish of trumpets, which gave

it an air of great importance. In reality, however, it meant little or nothing, for it always left the two friends at the top of the tree, the only change in their respective positions being an exchange of office, the Grand Vizier becoming the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and vice versa.

Ali Pasha, as I saw him then, was a slight, short and rather delicate-looking man, who spoke in a low, soft, gentle voice, and was so meek and mild in his manner that it was difficult to fit his appearance in with his position as the Great Functionary who, whilst holding the seals of the Grand Vizierate, exercised all the authority of the Sultan, and whose decrees were held to be as valid as Imperial "iradehs" (decisions of the Sultan).

Fuad Pasha was a great contrast. He was big and burly in form. Ali was the silent one, with a shrewd mind noting and taking in everything, but giving out little himself. Fuad was the talker, and a brilliant one. From his mother, Leila Hanoun, well known for her writings in cultivated Turkish circles, he had inherited poetical gifts and could be also very witty in his conversation, both in French and in Turkish. There are many of his "bon-mots" still quoted by those of a generation, slowly passing away, who heard them. I myself heard one from his own lips on the night when Abdul Aziz returned. Foreign ladies were being escorted by the members of various Embassies to the entrance door of the Harem Apartments, for them to pass in and make their obeisance to the Grand Vizier's wife, who sat in state surrounded by other Turkish ladies. I had discreetly withdrawn to some little distance down the passage to wait for the return of the lady whom I had escorted to the door. Just then a young French Secretary came along with a lady on his arm, and as soon as she had entered, instead of coming away he was moving about on tip-toe, peering in from the entrance, and

endeavouring to catch sight of the Turkish ladies. He was still so engaged when up came Fuad Pasha. Tapping him on the shoulder : " Pardon, mon ami," said he, " votre mission est auprès de la Porte, pas à la porte . . . n'oubliez-pas " (I beg your pardon, your mission is to be near the door, not at the door). It is, of course, a play upon the word " porte," the *Porte* being the term in general use for designating the Seat of Government and, in fact, the Government itself.

There is another witticism which I heard and, although in French and a play upon a Turkish word, it is so good that it is worth repeating. A meeting of the Council of Ministers was taking place, and all its members were assembled save a certain Achmet Pasha, who held, jointly, the Portfolios of Minister of War and Justice. European carriages had begun to find favour amongst the Turkish Grandees, and Achmet had become the possessor of one, and in imitation of the Ambassadorial conveyances which bore the arms of their owners, he had painted upon the panels of his vehicle what he thought would be very appropriate insignia. Whilst waiting, the conversation naturally turned upon the missing man, and one of the Ministers asked the Grand Vizier—Fuad at the time—what was the meaning of the design on Achmet Pasha's carriage. " Why, don't you know ? " quickly came the response, " Ces sont ses Armoiries. . . . Père et Vaincre (Payseyvank)—est-ce qu'il n'est pas Payseyvank." The design as indicating his double office was a sword crossing a pair of scales, the " Sword " of the Minister of War and the " Balance " being that of Justice. Appropriate enough an outsider would think, and it was doubly so in the eyes of the Turks ; the *mot* elicited shouts of laughter and " Evets," and " Sighyas " (" yes, yes," and " truly so ") as all present saw the joke and the application of the opprobrious term, " Payseyvank."

It is a word of the greatest insult, implying the utmost contempt, and Achmet Pasha, it is said, well deserved the epithet.

Fuad Pasha was never at a loss for words, and when, during the visit of Sultan Aziz to Queen Victoria, it became his duty, as the Imperial Interpreter, to acknowledge in fitting terms the honour bestowed upon his Sovereign by Her Majesty, the very highest in her power (the Knighthood of the Garter), he wound up a very flowery speech as follows :

“ There is in two events which this day have taken place an interesting coincidence which my Imperial Master desires me to point out. Your gracious Majesty has just created a Mohammedan Monarch a Christian Knight, and he himself has this day made a Mohammedan Pasha of a Christian Bey.” This was Musurus Pasha, who, as Musurus Bey, had been for several years Ottoman Ambassador, and who was in much favour with the Queen. It was the very first occasion on which a Christian subject or a foreigner in the service of the *Porte* had been raised to such high rank. There were, it is true, other Pashas of Christian origin at the time, but they were all nominally of Moslem Faith and bore Moslem names. Musurus’ son, Etienne, also occupied the same position as he had done, for a few years towards the close of the reign of Abdul Hamid.

I saw on that first night only one portion of the vast illuminations, but the following evening I took passage with a few shore friends in one of the ferry-boats, and traversed the Bosphorus from end to end. It was a marvellous sight. Turkey at that time possessed one of the most powerful of modern Fleets, the third in the world, as far as I recollect, in respect to formidable ironclads heavily armoured and armed for those days. They were all moored in a single “ line-ahead ” which stretched from Tophanè, at the mouth of the harbour, to Cooroochesmeh, just

below Bebek. They were all dressed with lanterns outlining hulls as well as masts and yards, for in those days ironclads were still fitted for the use of sail power. Bluejackets manning the yards were burning blue lights continually, whilst from the after-part of the vessels rose in quick succession rockets and bomb-bouquets, bursting into showers of brilliant gold and coloured sparkling rain. Off every village of any size on the Bosphorus large lighters and rafts were moored, manned by artillerymen and sailors of the Fleet, also continuously letting off rockets and bombs, and fiery wheels and other set pieces. The din was terrific. The noise of the explosion of the larger bombs reverberated amongst the hills, and it was really difficult to distinguish any of the stars, so densely covered was the sky with the fragments of light falling after the various explosions in mid-air.

Along the shore-line on each side for the whole length of the winding river-like strait wherever there were villages or isolated houses with or without gardens or grounds, a wooden trellis-work had been set up from six to eight feet high, upon which were suspended small glass white and coloured oil-lamps, through which shone the burning wicks, making them sparkle like jewels. There were myriads of them, and the trellis-work looked like jewelled lace. Behind all this splendour of illumination rose the terraced gardens of the Pashas and Beys, and of the many very wealthy Greeks and Armenians possessing handsome residences on the Bosphorus, all making a great display in order to show their loyalty. From the trees on the rising ground behind the flower-beds of the terraces were suspended at various heights, lights in white glass lanterns, which sparkled like fire-flies darting about amongst the dark foliage. There, also on the terraces, below the trees, were many illuminated devices to be seen,

suspended as it were in the air, including the "Stars" of the Imperial Orders of the "Mejedieh" and "Osmanieh," and, in the graceful curves of Turkish writing the loyal greeting, "Padi-shah choke Yasha" (Long live the King of Kings).

It was really a wonderful sight, and the illuminations were carried on for a third night, but not quite to the same extent. I saw many other grand illuminations during my long stay in Constantinople, as there was always a great display upon the anniversary of the reigning Sultan's birth, and other occasions, but never again were they upon such a lavish scale.

There was a notable illumination during the visit of the Empress Eugenie; it took place after a grand review and a gala dinner in the Imperial Kiosque at Beikos. All the lower part of the Bosphorus was lighted up, to make a fairy pathway of the water for her return to the Palace of Beyler-Bey, where she was staying as the guest of the "Grand Scignior," and in the display quite a new feature was introduced. Troops had been "echelloned" along the Heights of the Bosphorus to fire their rifles by platoons in succession as the Empress passed down in the large State Caique of the Sultan, with its escort, so that the flashes of the blank cartridges might appear in the darkness of the foliage behind the soldiers like fire-flies dancing attendance.

Of course my mates concluded that my "Maid of Athens" bet was won by them, and they were clamouring for payment of the stakes: champagne for dinner. However, the time limit was not quite over, and there was an intervening Sunday, a good day for calling, as I had found out. So on the afternoon of that day I boldly went and rang at the door. Armed with the knowledge of some half a dozen words of Modern Greek, I enquired, "Fenely Bey sto speitee?" ("Is Fenely Bey at home?")—

"Oikee" (No). "Madama?"—"Oikee." By Jove, I'm sold, I thought. Then once more I put a question, "Mademoiselle Zoe sto speitee?"—"Malista," this time came the answer (Yes). Then as I was wondering how with my limited knowledge of "Romaika" (Modern Greek) I could manage to make the servant understand that I wanted to see Miss Zoe, came a melodious voice from above the stairway. A word or two of Greek to the servant, and then to myself, "Montez, Monsieur, s'il vous plait," and I went up to find the goddess of my mess-mates' worship all alone.

I had learned more about her by this time; that she was an orphan living together with her sister, and had one brother, Photiadis Bey, then the Sultan's Representative at the Court of Italy. We walked into the small salon, and then I essayed to explain to her the great disappointment the officers of the *Caradoc* had all felt at her not having accompanied her sister to the ball, and she, in her anxiety to comprehend my very bad French, looked so earnestly out of her lovely large eyes, that away flew from my memory all my knowledge of that language. I could think of nothing but the beauty of her face, and could only stammer and stutter in vain. Alas, she had never learnt English, and I found it as difficult to follow her French as she did to understand mine. Under such circumstances talk was not an easy business. I managed, however, to make out in the course of what was said between us that she was a Greek Patriot, although a subject of the Sultan, and that she was trying to convert me to Philhellenism.

I returned on board to receive the congratulations of my friends, who, watching me as I landed, had noted my admittance, and remained long enough *en garde* with their glasses to catch a glimpse of us sitting together near the window of a salon. I am



afraid I had not been sufficiently receptive of her ideas upon the politics of the Levant, to have made any very favourable impression upon her mind, or to lead in my direction any of her thoughts of the future. Or, it may have been that her guardian, the brother-in-law, didn't want to have any fortuneless young foreign officers dangling about his ward. But whatever the reason was I did not receive the slightest encouragement to renew my calls, and although the young lady did return my bow with a smile whenever we passed each other, the acquaintance went no further. The Greeks of the upper class in those days kept very much to themselves, and there was little social intercourse between them and foreigners. They were invited to the Embassy Balls given during the Carnival, and the wealthy merchants and bankers among them gave balls also, to which Members of the Embassies and Officers of the "Stationnaires" were invited. But alliances with foreigners were not looked upon with favour. Marriages were always matters of arrangement, and dowers always being required with a wife, wealth wedded riches. There had been an exception, however, a few years previously, when a gay young Flag Lieutenant had managed to secure the hand of one of the richest heiresses of Constantinople. She was one of the three very pretty daughters of a rich banker by the name of Baltazzi, who had married an English lady. Their parents were dead, and each was left a large fortune, with possession unhampered with any conditions which affected the exercise of their own will. Another of them married a First Secretary of the Austrian Embassy, and one of his daughters was the young Baroness Vetsera whose life ended with that of Prince Rudolph the heir to the Austro-Hungarian Throne, in that mysterious tragedy which took place in a lonely hunting lodge. The young Duke of Norfolk, who a few months before my arrival

had been on a visit to his uncle, Lord Lyons, the Ambassador, was said to have been very much smitten by the charms of the youngest of the trio of beauties.

Lord Lyons was a bachelor, and a misogynist, it was said, like Sheffield, his private secretary. So, although His Excellency gave excellent dinners, no ladies ever graced his table. He was very kind to all connected with the Embassy, and especially to the officers of the *Caradoc*, who were frequently invited to dine with him. He had a fine presence and kept up considerable state, with a "chasseur" in resplendent costume, in addition to his kavasses in their embroidered uniforms. Within a few weeks after my joining the *Caradoc* he left to take up his new post as Ambassador in Paris. We took him to Varna, the Bulgarian port on the Black Sea, that he might return overland *via* the Danube, the only route open in those days except the Mediterranean. Our Captain took advantage of the opportunity to rush off on a visit to Budapest, and I thought I might as well give myself leave to go on an exploration voyage to Lake Devno, near Varna. It was there I met, living alone, but very happy and comfortable, a compatriot, named Sinclair, who told me he had been a Captain in the British Army, while his brother was in the Diplomatic Service and a Secretary in the Embassy at St. Petersburg. On a subsequent shooting visit to him I made the acquaintance of his friend, Brophy, who afterwards became British Vice-Consul at Varna. I learnt from him more of the history of the recluse. He had really been in the Army. He was the son of a Polish Countess who had married a Scotsman of good family. He had imbibed with his Polish blood a hatred of Russia, and sympathised so much with his downtrodden kinsmen, that he had got mixed up with the last great Polish insurrection. He was taken prisoner, and but for the influence of

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## The Two Last Great Statesmen of Turkey 267

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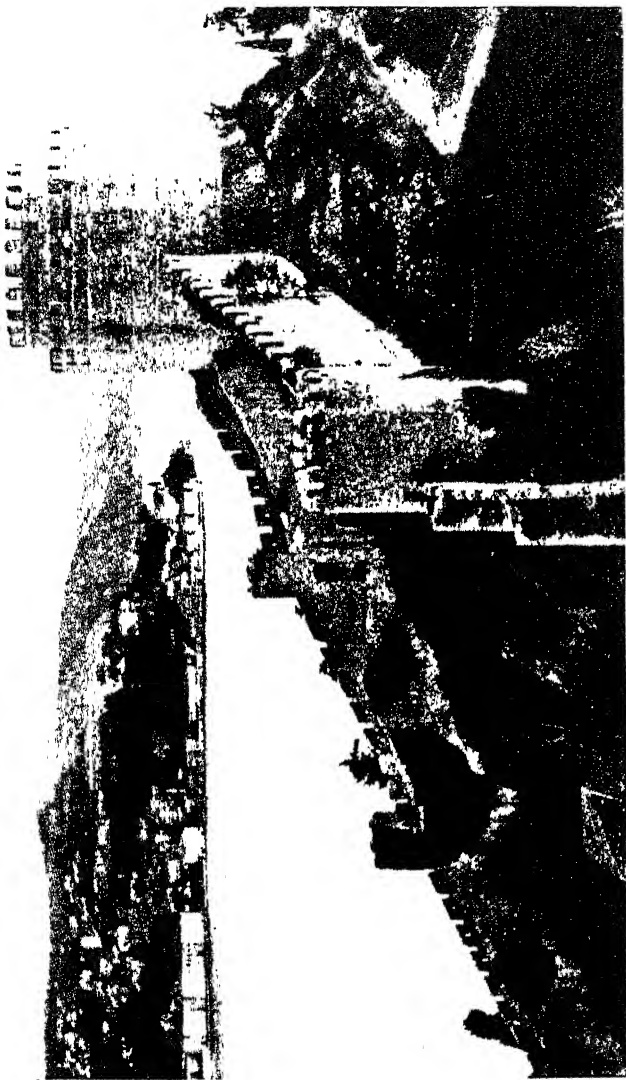
his brother, and the strong pressure of the Foreign Office, would have been shot. He was sentenced to perpetual exile from Poland, and this it was that brought him to Bulgaria. I never met him nor heard of him again until the Russo-Turkish War, when he turned up some weeks after the fall of Plevna. He had been fighting from the commencement of the War as a Guerilla leader, at the head of a large force of Mohammedan Pomaks. A picturesque character, one of several I came across during my life in the East.

## CHAPTER XXII

## THE FIGHT FOR THE BOSPHORUS LIGHTSHIP

SOON after our return to Therapia from Varna on the first occasion, I was appointed by Sir Henry Barron, our Chargé d’Affaires, British Delegate to an International Commission which had been formed to study the question of shipwrecks and loss of life in connection with the navigation of the Black Sea and the entrance to the Bosphorus. This was due to the recommendation of Captain Wilkinson of the *Caradoc*, who, after the first few sittings, resigned the position, suggesting that the work was much more in my line than his. I owe to him a debt of gratitude for this, as it proved to be the foundation of my future career, although he could not have had the slightest idea at the time, as to what such a position might lead to.

In those days the Black Sea still bore the same evil reputation which it did in the days of the Argonauts. Navigation was suspended by all native craft during the winter months. Indeed for nearly half the year, from about the middle of April to the first weeks of October, no native vessel of any size ventured upon its black and stormy waters, save for a short coasting voyage under exceptional circumstances of fine weather. For the most part all the country ships were laid up in safe harbours until the fine season had set in. The Bosphorus and its creeks were full of them, lying in tiers. The Black Sea was considered, by all Mediterranean sailors, not only Turks and Greeks, but



THE OLD CASTLE OF RUMELI HISSAR.  
'AT THE BLACK SEA ENTRANCE TO THE BOSPORUS.'



Italians as well, to be highly treacherous, with its sudden gales, its high short chopping waves, and shifting cross currents, and I can still remember the astonishment, I might even say dismay, with which one of my first propositions was received. It was to place a lightship at anchor well outside the entrance, to serve as a sign-post for the Bosphorus, and those with any knowledge of the sea declared it would be an act of madness to do so. Yet amongst my colleagues were two senior Captains of the French Messageries and Austrian Lloyd Mail Services, attached to their respective Consulates, as Harbour Masters and Marine Magistrates. The opening up of the Danube after the Crimean War, giving access to the grain-producing plains of Eastern Europe in addition to those of Southern Russia, had given a great impetus to the shipping trade in the Black Sea, and many were the foreign sailing-vessels from Western Europe that passed through the Bosphorus. Quite seventy per cent. were under the British Flag, and of the remainder a large proportion were Scandinavian ships. Norway and Sweden were still a joint kingdom, and its Consul-General, Mr. Anker Bodker, was a very energetic official, and it was greatly due to his activity in the matter, that the Turkish Government had been brought at last to consent to the formation of this International Commission. Heavy had been the annual toll of life and property exacted by that stormy sea. As the number of ships increased so did the casualties, and it was hoped that some means might be devised to render the approach to the Bosphorus less hazardous.

Under the pressure of our Foreign Office the *Porte* undertook to carry out such measures as were deemed necessary, on condition that the expense should be met by a tax upon the shipping which would benefit by the work that was done. Apart from the two Mail Captains mentioned above, and a Norwegian

merchant who had been master and owner of a sailing-ship, all the other members were Vice-Consuls, men of no experience whatever. They personified, however, a mass of ignorance with which I had to contend, as they all wanted to have their say before signing any document embodying proposals to be urged upon the *Porte*. Nothing had been done up to the time I joined. Not a single practical measure had been proposed, in spite of all the discussion that had taken place. I started in at once to obtain the nomination of a sub-committee of three, to which the Commission should delegate its power of initiative. I succeeded more readily than I expected, the fact being that our services were gratuitous, and there was no money in it. I was appointed Chairman of the Sub-Committee, with the Turkish delegate, and the Inspecting Engineer of the Austrian Lloyd as my colleagues, and we worked together the whole time on the most friendly terms. It soon became a one man's job. My Austrian friend was a very busy man, and contented himself with approving all my propositions, and my Turkish colleague would accept no responsibility, but left me to devise everything. It turned out a very happy arrangement; both gave me the most loyal support, and when we went before the Commission with my proposals I always found the strongest possible backers in the Norwegian Consul-General and the Sea-Captain.

I found, upon investigation, that one great source of danger, and which often led to shipwreck, was the existence on each side of the Bosphorus of localities which very strongly resemble the entrance to it from the Black Sea. So very like, indeed, is the appearance of the land about these "false Bosphoruses," that sailing vessels would occasionally get too close inshore before the mistake was discovered to allow of their regaining the offing. Coming across the Black Sea with a fair wind behind them, they



would find themselves on a lee-shore, upon which they would soon be driven. Striking upon the sand-banks skirting the shore, they would soon be broken up by the heavy seas rolling in, and leave but a few of their timbers sticking out of the sandy beach as a memorial of their fate. Many such sad mementoes did I see as I rode along those beaches on my first inspecting visits. Very bad was the plight of the poor men on board ships which went ashore under such circumstances, especially at night and in winter weather. Except at Riva, a few miles outside the Bosphorus, where there is a small village, and Shillee, a townlet about thirty miles to the eastward, all the villages and farm-houses along the coast lie well back from the shore, under the shelter of the hills, and there is little, or no chance at all, one might say, of any of the inhabitants hearing of a ship being in distress, until it is too late for any assistance on their part to be rendered. It is very bad landing in the surf, and even the few survivors who did reach the shore alive stood every chance of dying from exposure to the icy blasts of the winter's wind, not knowing where to look for shelter. There were often found after a shipwreck many dead bodies of men who had strayed away from the beach.

I found similar conditions prevalent on the western side of the Bosphorus as I had found on the eastern ; a false Bosphorus at Derkos as there is at Shillee. It was on account of these that I proposed to place a lightship off the true entrance, as far out as practicable, so that vessels should make for it and not proceed beyond its estimated distance until they had seen it or heard its loud-sounding bell in time of fog. The other meaßures I proposed, after I had made my inspection visits, were the erection of beacons at various points along the shores, the construction of a few refuge-houses provided with blankets and

warm clothing, and the establishment of life-saving rocket stations, and life-boats—two on each side. The presentation of my report and propositions led to a very lively debate, more especially over the first item, the lightship. The only professional member who stood by me was the Norwegian ex-Captain. The others thought it far too dangerous an “experiment,” as they called it, and asserted it would only lead to a useless waste of money. I did not know the Black Sea, they told me. No ship could ride out a gale, exposed to such terrible waves, and with such a heavy weight of cable as would be required. I replied that if I did not know the Black Sea I knew the Atlantic and its heavy rollers as well as those of the Cape. I had to listen to a lot of foolish arguments about the weight of the cable pulling the ship’s bows so low down that she would not be able to ride over the seas. I won the two Mediterranean Captains over at last, by talking to them about the “Seven-stones Lightship” anchored right out in the Atlantic. I had, too, stung their pride a bit, for I lost my temper at last, declaring that I was not afraid for the safety of the ship or her crew, and that if I could only get her built I would myself place her out in the Black Sea and spend the first winter month on board, while I could find plenty of Englishmen ready to captain her. They said they would take me at my word, and I replied: “All right, sign the Protocol,” and they did.

To save time I had already got the Embassy to obtain from Trinity House plans for a light-vessel to be anchored in from seventy to eighty fathoms of water in the open sea, to be fitted with two masts of unequal height, each to carry a basket-work globe during the day, and at night one of the most powerful white lights that could be displayed on board any lightship. I also asked for estimates in respect to her equipment of lanterns and

light, fog-bell with clockwork machinery, and mooring anchors and cables. After this we all got on very amicably together, and I could always depend upon the unanimous support of the Commission when I wanted to bring pressure upon the Turkish authorities to get our recommendations carried out. I had got the work well in hand when a "shell" was suddenly exploded over the Commission; the Captain and I both received our promotion. Wilkinson became Commander and I a Lieutenant. Our successors had been appointed and we were ordered home. When I informed my colleagues at a meeting hastily called for the purpose, they were aghast, my friend Anker Bodker especially. He saw vanishing all his hopes of a successful result to his hard work in getting the Commission together. He harangued the members, and they decided at once to draw up a petition to the British Ambassador, to ask that my services might be retained, and to point out how necessary it was for the British delegate to be a Naval Officer with technical knowledge. The Ambassador, Sir Henry Elliot, forwarded the petition with his recommendations, and before I had made any preparations for leaving, I was appointed a supernumerary officer to the *Caradoc* for special service at the Embassy. I was specially interested in my work, and had a very loyal assistant in Captain Ahmed Bey. He was a Colonel in rank, as the Naval forces in Turkey form the Army of the Sea, while all officers have military titles, and in those days received the same pay and rations as their military compeers. He was the son of the Admiral Osman Pasha who was in command of the Turkish Squadron lying at anchor in Sinope Bay, when it was suddenly attacked by, an overwhelming Russian Fleet of ships of the line. It was called a massacre at the time, as there had been no previous declaration of war. The gallant old Turk would not surrender, and the

frigates and corvettes of which the force under his command was mainly composed, fought until they were all destroyed, sunk or burnt. The slaughter was very great. Many were killed and wounded on the side of the Turks, the Admiral himself receiving several injuries besides the wound which cost him a leg. Ahmed Bey had three sons, the youngest of whom was called after his grandfather and was the Osman Pasha who lost his life in Japan, in the wreck of the Turkish frigate *Ertogrul*, which had been sent upon a mission to the Mikado.

## CHAPTER XXIII

## NIGHT WANDERINGS IN STAMBOUL

I SPENT several days during my first Ramazan in Turkey as a guest in the large "konak" (residence) of my friend Ahmed Bey. He had been educated in England and spoke English perfectly. I had a most interesting time, as, after the evening meal, we used to sally forth and visit the various cafés where the "kesseghurs" (professional story-tellers), were holding forth, or "Karageuze" was playing his tricks, as shown in "shadow pictures" (ombres chinoises), and related in the squeaking tones of the operator. It is a sort of Punch and Judy show, in which "Karageuze" (Black Eyes) is the Punch who uses a cudgel freely and talks about his neighbours, both male and female, with rather coarse wit. A large proportion of the audience were women. During the Ramazan they were allowed much more freedom, and, coming out of the mosques from their first evening prayer, would flock into the nearest place of entertainment. They were, however, closely veiled in their *yashmaks* in those days, and sat apart from the men. They seemed to enjoy the jokes, very *risqué* as some of them were, to judge by the laughter. My friend used to interpret for me, and I quite enjoyed these Turco-Arabian Nights. I was accustomed to dress as a Turk, wearing a fez and the "stamboulee" long black cloth

single-buttoned frock-coat of the civilian official, and "effendi" (gentleman), and if accosted in a Turkish quarter I pretended to be dumb. I went with him into several mosques, during the hour of prayer, one of them being St. Sophia. We just walked slowly round the edge of the kneeling worshippers, rising and falling in their appointed genuflections, as if we were seeking some special vacant place for us both to join in the service together. In those days of the long ago, when the great Fast was much more strictly observed than at the present day, a stroll about the streets of Constantinople, away from the Christian quarters, was much more interesting than now. During the daytime there was little or no movement. Sleep seemed to have descended all over the place. But about an hour before sunset, people in the cafés and cook-shops began to wake up and bustle about. Small tables and chairs were brought out and placed on the pavement, as on the boulevards in Paris. Coffee was ground and narghilehs prepared in the cafés, and charcoal fires lighted.

Within half an hour or so, clients would be strolling in, and then as the sunset hour approached, waiters would place before them little saucers with an olive or two and a morsel of bread, with a glass of water. It was curious to watch the various attitudes and gestures of the customers, anxiously waiting, watch in hand, for the signal that was to release them from their long fast. A cigarette would be rolled and placed near at hand, and then with one eye fixed upon the contents of the glasses and saucers, and the other upon their watches, they would sit with ears strained to catch the first sound of the sunset guns. At last came the booming cannon from all directions that proclaimed the day's abstinence from food and drink at an end. A sip of water, the olives and bread hastily eaten, and then came the

cigarette and a little neighbourly chat. I have mentioned the "kesseghurs." Their stories were quite in the style of those of the Arabian Nights, and they were very clever in their imitation of voices. There was at a café we used to frequent one performer who did it so well that it was only necessary to close one's eyes to have the whole scene clearly before the mental vision, as he carried on his dialogues in the accents of the various characters figuring in his tales. There was the jealous husband and the slippery wife, the lover and the people from different parts of the country. The "cinema" has now taken the place of the "kesseghur's" tales and "Karageuze" has had to make way for the "Vaudeville" performed by Armenian troupes, so that most of the Oriental cachet, which featured Ramazan amusements in the past, is now wanting.

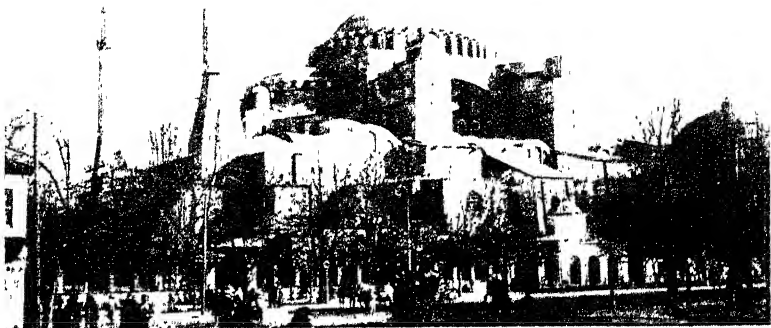
As for visiting the mosques, even the Mosque Eyoub, the most sacred of all, is now open to the gaze of the non-Mohammedan, and it has become one of the regular items of the Globe Trotters' visit to Constantinople, to see the Tomb of the Standard-bearer of the Prophet, and if there during the Ramazan, to witness the night service in St. Sophia as well. But in the days of which I am writing it would have been death for any non-Mohammedan to have been discovered anywhere within their precincts. I have witnessed the first service after the evening meal several times in St. Sophia, during the after years of my life in Turkey, and on the 27th of Ramazan too, the "night of power," as it is called, the most holy and revered period of the whole Moslem year.

On that night the mosques are crowded with fervent worshippers, particularly St. Sophia. Looking down from the Women's Gallery to which access is obtained by a stairway in its massive

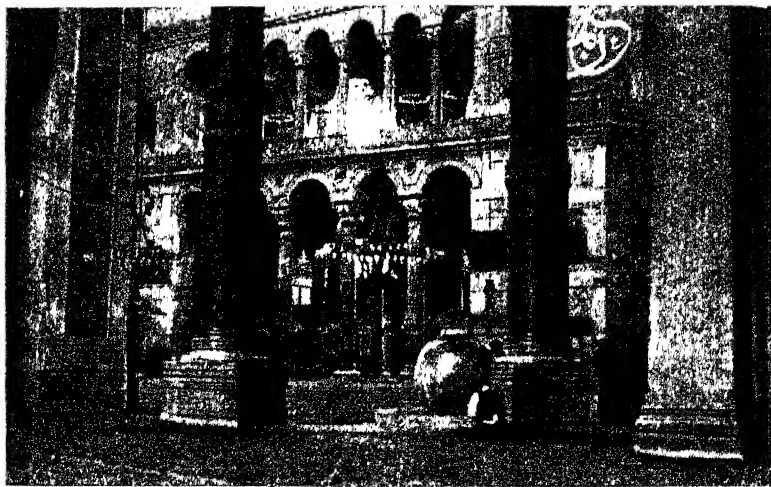
outer wall, with its entry outside that of the mosque itself, I have seen its vast area covered at all parts with serried ranks of the followers of the Prophet. Never have I failed to be much impressed by the reverent attitude of the congregation and the solemnity of the service, by the musical cadences of the "Ameens" ending each softly whispered confession and prayer and then the sudden breaks in the few moments of the great silence which pervades the atmosphere after a genuflection. Every now and then would be heard issuing from one corner of the great building, in a loud and solemn tone, an invocation of the attributes of the Almighty, Allah Hoo! (God is great). answered by a similar call from another quarter (God is all powerful). It is a sight never to be forgotten. Watching from above I could not help comparing the scene to a human sea. The worshippers coming into the mosques in little groups were at various stages of their prayers, and so were not all rising and bowing together. They rose and fell in broken lines all over the places, like the breakers rolling in upon the shore, and the rustle of the flowing garments which most of them wore, was as the noise of waves breaking upon a sandy beach. The 27th night of Ramazan is a night of penitence and pardon. According to the belief of all true Mohammedans, on this night of the year the Heavens are opened and the angels pass up and down carrying with them the prayers and supplications of penitent sinners, and bringing back with them the pardon of the Almighty for the sins of the past year.

No one who has visited the mosques in Constantinople during the hours of prayer, and witnessed the service with unprejudiced eyes, can fail to be impressed by the devout bearing of the worshippers. It is such a striking contrast to what one sees at





ST. SOPHIA---OUTSIDE



ST. SOPHIA—INSIDE.



times in Western churches. It did not surprise me, therefore, to hear from the mouth of an Army chaplain, who spent several months in Constantinople during the first years of the Armistice, that he hoped St. Sophia would never pass out of the hands of the Turks.

## CHAPTER XXIV

## THE ADVENT OF RAILWAY CONCESSIONS

I FOUND my work on the International Commission very interesting. There was plenty of it as practically everything rested upon my shoulders. It was by no means sufficient, after devising measures and making plans, merely to get everything passed by my colleagues and embodied in a protocol. Demands for the execution of the schemes remained "dead letters" until I could bring artillery to bear to dislodge them from where they had been placed; "Mindar altinda," as the Turks say (under the sofa to be forgotten). The President of the Commission was a very nice, amiable Turkish Admiral, Saleh Pasha by name, the Prefect of the Port. I could generally get the document, properly engrossed and duly signed, dispatched from his office to the Ministry of Marine in little over a week. Then, however, it went into limbo as an unpopular demand for expenditure more urgently wanted in other directions. There was no sympathy for the work amongst the Turkish Authorities, who looked upon the execution of our projects as a foolish waste of money for which they could see no prospective benefit in return.

Fortunately I was allowed the services of one of our Embassy Dragomans (Interpreters), Mr. H. Simmonds, and I made use of him as my heavy gun to bring my weighty charges of broken promises, procrastination and neglect to bear upon the highest authority in each Department interested. From the Ministry of

Marine the documents had to go to the "Grand Vizierate" for transmission to the Turkish Foreign Office—then back by the same route to the Admiralty with the final approval of the Government. I had to chivy them all the way round. In this way I became well known to the Turks, and in spite of their indifference to the object of my visits I became rather a *persona grata* with them. It was just about this time that Baron Hirsch made his first appearance in Constantinople as a suitor for a Railway Concession, and I often met him at the *Porte* engaged on "Antichambre" business with his Local Agent, a wily Armenian. I remember Baron Hirsch so well as a rather short, stout man with the black portfolio that he always carried under his arm, and he used to eye me rather with envy when he saw me so readily admitted to the Grand Vizier's presence, whilst he had been kept so long waiting outside. But he was very successful in the end. He knew so well the attraction of large figures, and when he wanted the indispensable support of any of those in high places, who, he knew through his jackal, could effectually block his proceedings, he bribed, it was said, with a million. "A million" has such a nice sound, and while of course it was a million francs—not pounds sterling—"a million francs" does appeal somehow to the imagination more than £40,000, its equivalent in those days in our money.

That concession laid the foundation of the very large fortune which he left at his death and which had enabled him to do so much for his distressed co-religionists. His projects worked out so beautifully—"You must have railways—you must connect Constantinople and other great centres of trade like Adrianople and Philippopolis with the rest of Europe by rail. But you cannot do it without the necessary money. £20,000,000 at least will be required. It is a large amount, but if you will

give me the contract for the construction of the railway I will obtain the money for you."

That, his first argument, won the consent of the *Porte* and the "Imperial Iradeh" (Decree) having been issued, the Baron, with his financial group, brought out his famous loan, the Roumelian Railway Lottery Bonds. They appealed to the speculating public like wild-fire. They were issued at par, and such was the demand that they immediately rose to a 5 per cent. premium. The financial group made a handsome profit in the way of commission, and the "Hirsch Construction Group" made, it was said, a still bigger and better one. The contract was based upon kilometric length, irrespective of the nature of the ground over which the railway would have to pass, or of any particular local features. The Government was to pay so much a kilometre, and only land under private ownership was to be paid for. Travellers to Constantinople must wonder at times at the way in which the railway meanders about, and the absence of such tunnelling as is usually met elsewhere, but those who now read the terms of construction will be able to guess the reason, and also why the stations should be so far away from the towns. The crowning contract of the group of three was that for working the railway when completed. Just as Hirsch had pointed out to the Government it possessed no experience whatever of railway construction, so he now pointed out to the Turkish Authorities that they knew nothing at all about working a railway and would undoubtedly get into difficulties over it, hence they would find it to their advantage to farm it out. His proposition to work it for them in co-partnership was accepted. His company, the "Roumelian Railway" as it was called, worked the Line and took all the receipts under a contract in which the working expenses were fixed at so much a "kilometre" to be

deducted from the receipts, any surplus being divided between the Government and the Company. The "Public Works Department" in this contract undertook to provide feeders for the railway in the shape of roads to the towns and villages, and to construct a harbour at Dedeagatch for the export of grain from the large cultivated fields of the Hinterland. It was pointed out at the time that the railway would undoubtedly be working at a loss until such facilities for trade and commerce had been afforded, and so it was understood that no profit-sharing would take place whilst this engagement remained unfulfilled. As might have been expected, little or nothing was done by the Turkish Authorities to meet this engagement, and the matter thus remained until after the war with Russia. It was known that the railway had done exceedingly well during the war, the transport of troops and stores having been paid for out of the Stores of Government grain from the tithes, besides which the general traffic had increased considerably.

Then was seen a curious ebb and flow in a stream of indignation that was poured out in the local Press against the alleged iniquitous proceedings of this Railway Company. Whenever a new Minister of Public Works was appointed, a violent attack upon the Company appeared at once, and the Government was urged to bring it to book. Then an announcement would follow to the effect that a strict investigation into the affairs of the Company was being made, and shortly after the matter would drop into oblivion as suddenly as it had sprung up, to amuse the cynical observer with the thought of how much it had cost to procure silence once more.

The first Minister of Marine I had anything to do with was called Hakki Pasha, a very quiet man who appeared not to possess very much influence. His successor was Nedim Pasha,

a man of much greater calibre. He was a statesman who had, like Ali and Fuad Pasha, served his apprenticeship in the school of statesmen under the enlightened Sultan Mahmud the Reformer. But he was a younger man than Ali and Fuad, and his political leaning was more towards Russia than towards the Western Powers. He had already filled several high posts in the various Government Departments and came to the " Teršana Divan Haneh " (the Admiralty), with a good deal of prestige in respect to his capacity. He was rather a fine-looking old white-bearded gentleman when he stood up, and he always received me with great courtesy ; but it rather surprised me at first to see him resume his place in a large armchair, sitting cross-legged on the ample space between its arms with his leg well arched under him just as if he were seated upon a well-padded cushion placed on the floor. Curious to relate, his Aide-de-camp, Faik Bey, proved to be the Turkish Officer of the corvette *Broussa* I had met at Mauritius on my way home from Japan. Faik was a handsome young Turk, and we became great friends, subsequently sailing together as shipmates on board the Naval Cadet training-frigate. He was a Cretan Turk and spoke Greek as well as English, and was altogether a fine specimen of the Turkish gentleman.

When Fuad and Ali Pashas had both passed away, the first in 1869 and the other in 1871, Nedim Pasha was selected by the Sultan as his Grand Vizier. He had not the strength of character to deal with the growing autocratic ideas of the Sultan, and took to flattering the pride of his Imperial Master instead of endeavouring to bring his mind towards the adoption of more Liberal ideas in respect to the Government of the Empire. It was in the reign of Abdul Aziz that the birth of the " Young Turks " Party took place which gave much trouble to the Sultan in his efforts



to cope with their attempts to diminish his absolute rule. Many promising young men who might have done good service to their country had to flee to escape exile and imprisonment—Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, to give him his full name, not only played into the hands of the Sultan, but he brought His Imperial Master to adopt more favourable views of Russia's attitude towards Turkey than was good for the political weal of the Empire. In fact, Nedim Pasha deserves to hold a special niche in history as the man who gave the greatest blow to the foundations of the Ottoman Empire.

He listened to Prince Ignatieff, the wily Russian Ambassador, and induced the Sultan to issue an "Iradeh" reducing, from the day of its issue, the payment of the interest upon the Foreign Loans by one-half as a great measure of relief to the Imperial Finances. The news came upon the European Market as a *coup de foudre*. It was a terrible blow to the many poor investors who were dependent upon the 6 per cent. interest on their Turkish Bonds. No remonstrances were of any avail. The "Iradeh" had been issued, and with Prince Ignatieff backing up the Grand Vizier's advice there was no chance of inducing Abdul Aziz to reverse his decree. Worse however than the suddenness with which it was issued was the fiction disseminated throughout the world by a news agency that the intention to issue the "Iradeh" had been abandoned. The correspondent affirmed he had seen the Grand Vizier two days before, who had assured him that the interest upon the Foreign Loans would not be interfered with. Well did this successful Muscovite political coup do its work. It poisoned the mind of many in England, and destroyed their faith in the goodwill of the Sultan's Government towards the Western Powers, whose people were the greatest sufferers.

There is no doubt that Turkey's financial position was anything but good, and the payment of this 6 per cent. interest was a great burden. It is, however, certain that had the Grand Vizier, instead of seeking the advice of his friend and a certain Russo-Greek banker " *au mieux* " with Ignatieff, solicited the assistance of the Governments of England and France, some relief would have been forthcoming, and Turkey would have escaped the ignominy of breaking her word.

## CHAPTER XXV

## ON THE SEA AND IN IT

ALL through 1868 and the following year I was carrying on the work of the Commission. I supervised the construction of the light vessel. Constant vigilance was necessary to prevent bad workmanship and the use of bad material. I had to be engineer and architect, making designs for "beacons" and "refuge houses" and seeing they were properly constructed. I spent much time at Anatoli-Kavak at the upper part of the Bosphorus, and it was a little bit like living in a page of the Arabian Nights. I was making a very close examination of the Black Sea approach to the Bosphorus for hidden dangers, carrying out lines of soundings to the edge of the foreshore bank where it abruptly ends in great depths of water. A small paddle-wheel steamer had been placed at my disposal for the purpose, but the Officer in Command would never remain outside the Bosphorus even in the finest weather, but always returned in time to tie up his old craft at the Quarantine Wharf.

Kavak is a Turkish village, far away from Constantinople, and its people seldom moved to any distance from it. When by some extraordinary chance one of them did happen to go down to the great city, he had so much to say about the wonders he had seen that he was the centre of a group of eager listeners when he appeared in the café. After our evening meal, Ahmed Bey and I used to take our seats on a comfortable divan upon the balcony

of a small café. It stood a little way up on the hillside above the water, and there was a lovely view from it—a long stretch of the Bosphorus as far down as Yenikoi below Therapia. Night after night I sat there smoking my narghileh and listening to the old turbaned greybeards talking about village affairs or childish stories of djinns and giants, and watched the play of the moonlight on the water and the starlike twinkling of the lights ashore.

There was a somewhat extraordinary incident that occurred one afternoon whilst I was sounding in the Black Sea far off the land. It was a lovely afternoon in summer, and I was seated at a table planning some soundings, when I felt a hand, as I thought, placed upon my head. I took it to be that of my friend Ahmed Bey, and not to lose the point indicated by the angles I had taken and was marking upon my chart, I made no movement for the moment. Then feeling the pressure removed just as I had finished my work, I looked up to enquire the meaning of it all, and saw Ahmed Bey standing at a distance near a knot of grinning sailors. "There, my dear friend," he cried, pointing to a large bird soaring away in the distance, "goes your visitor. It was a small eagle which came and perched upon your head." It may have been an eagle or possibly one of the smaller birds of that type, but whatever it was, it had no doubt been attracted by the colour of my head covering, since I was wearing at the time, as I always did when working with Turkish officers and men, a red fez. It was curious, however, that I, the only stranger on board, and with no National right to sport such a head-dress, should have been singled out by the bird for such attention, instead of one of the others on deck. I was much congratulated by my friend and the other Turks who had seen the bird perch upon my head, upon the great good luck which, as they alleged, was in store for me.

It was a pleasant life in Turkey in those days. I generally



HALKI, ONE OF THE PRINCE'S ISLANDS, IN THE SEA OF MARMORA.  
 (THE NAVAL COLLEGE IS SLIGHTLY TO THE RIGHT OF THE MIDDLE OF THE PICTURE  
 THE GREEK THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE IS ON THE TOP OF THE HILL TO THE RIGHT  
 THE GREEK COMMERCIAL COLLEGE IS AT THE FOOT OF THE HILL ON THE LEFT)



PRINKIPO—THE LARGEST OF THE PRINCE'S ISLANDS GROUP.  
 (IT WAS OFF THE TWO ISLANDS ABOVE THAT THE BRITISH FLEET REMAINED SO  
 LONG AT ANCHOR IN THE TURCO-RUSSIAN WAR)



spent my week-ends either at Therapia, on board the *Stationnaire*, or at the Prince's Island with friends. There was living then in Constantinople one of the most hospitable fellows whom anyone could ever come across. He was a typical Englishman, honest, straightforward, and energetic, and never spared either time or money when it was a question of helping a friend. He was one of the high officials of the Imperial Ottoman Bank, and was deservedly recognised as the leading Member of the British Civilian Community. Sir Frederick Smythe, as he subsequently became, receiving a K.C.M.G. at the Jubilee of Queen Victoria for his public service, possessed a charming villa at Prinkipo, where he and his wife always spent the summer. In town he kept open house for the officers of the *Stationnaire*, and it was known as the "Sailors' Home" to naval visitors. A true home it was to me, as in it I found my future wife, who came to Constantinople on a visit to her sister, married to the leading British lawyer in the Levant. The Smythes had no children of their own, but loved to have young people always about them, and were never so happy as when their house was full of guests.

The Marmora is an ideal place for yachting in the summer—very seldom is there a gale of wind blowing from the first week in May to the last one in August ; but there is generally a good sailing breeze in the afternoon. It springs up in the Black Sea shortly after the sun has reached the meridian, and gradually gathering strength as it comes down the Bosphorus, strikes the Marmora about 2 p.m. as a steady north-easterly wind.

My friend, Frederick St. John, of the Embassy, possessed a roomy dinghy fitted for sailing, and one day he proposed that we should run down to the Prince's Islands, in the Marmora, and spend the week-end in her at Prinkipo. We started with the first light airs of the "meltem," as this summer wind is called, and as it

freshened, we flew before it, and had a glorious sail of some twenty miles to the islands, arriving in time for afternoon tea at the Smythe's villa. We spent a pleasant Sunday there, and on the Monday morning on saying good-bye to our friends, the lady of the villa would insist on our taking the luncheon basket she had provided for us, although we were engaged to have tiffin with the Hobarts on our way back to Therapia. "Oh," she said, "you never know your luck; you may be shipwrecked on the way." Fortunate it was that we had the basket with us, as long before we got near our destination the luncheon hour had passed. The Hobarts were living at the village of Moda, standing on the shore of a little bay near the entrance to the Bosphorus. It is an interesting place, as it occupies the site of the ancient city of Chalcedon, "the City of the Blind," so called because those who built and settled there were so blind to the greater advantages offered by the Golden Horn, so close at hand on the other side of the water.

The light sea breeze of the early morn, upon which our hopes of an early arrival at Moda had been based, instead of freshening as the sun rose, died away before we had traversed little more than half the distance. We enjoyed our luncheon, drinking to the health of our fair provider, in the bottle of good wine we found amongst the contents of the basket. Chaffing friends afterwards declared that this good wine had been the cause of the accident which was awaiting us, though this was a gross libel upon our characters for sobriety and good seamanship. It was a very hot day, and we had shed all superfluous clothing. We patiently waited for the "meltem," and at last it came, and we soon found ourselves abreast of Moda Bay. We were, however, about a mile off shore, and the wind was dead against us. Unfortunately, too, it was not blowing steadily in the same direction, but in squally



gusts, shifting two or three points on its way to us, and we capsized in one of them just as we were changing course and were still about half a mile off shore—a mishap which would have happened to any sailorman under the same circumstances. The boat did not sink entirely, but remained completely submerged, affording us not the slightest support, as the moment any part of her was touched with hand or foot, down she went until the pressure was removed.

By good luck there was a large bulky cushion seat in the boat filled with cork. This had been seized by St. John as he went over, and I saw him bobbing up and down safely enough holding on to it. I knew, however, that he could not swim, and felt somewhat doubtful as to its capacity to keep both of us afloat. There were no boats or caiques in sight, and we were drifting away down the Marmora, so I made up my mind to start for the shore, so that I could send off assistance to St. John. I thought, however, it would be as well to free myself as much as possible from all encumbrances before I started, and proceeded to take off my boots. As I did so, my head went under water for a moment, and I heard a yell of dismay from St. John. Up came my head again. "What's the matter, old chap?" I queried. "Good God! Woods, I thought you had gone." "Oh, no," I said, "I was only trying to get my boots off. Davy Jones has had two chances already of putting me into his locker. This is the third, and he hasn't got me yet." He begged me to try whether the buoy would do for us both before I left him all alone, and so to please him I did so, and to my great relief found that its buoyancy was quite sufficient. So there we were, like two mandarins, bobbing up and down in face of each other, as we rose and fell with the waves. In about half an hour or so, we saw coming towards us a large "bazaar caique" (village omnibus) with its passengers and goods

for one of the small coast towns beyond Moda. Catching sight of us, the crew pulled for all they were worth. As she passed us pretty quickly without having slackened speed in time, a couple of passengers clutched St. John and pulled him inboard, whilst the coxswain threw a rope to me. Unfortunately with the "way" the boat still had upon her, I was dragged under water, and having to open my mouth, when my head came up again I lost the hold I had with my teeth upon my waistcoat.

In one of its pockets was my gold watch, fastened with its chain to a buttonhole. I had clutched the waistcoat before the boat went under, intending to hold on to it as long as I could, to save my watch. I could have saved it easily enough had but the men in the caique allowed me to do so. It was sinking very slowly, and with a short dive I could have recaptured it, but they were all so excited over our rescue that, having hauled me out of the water, they were not going to let me return to it. Apparently they thought I had lost my head, and held me tight as I struggled to get away from them. They seemed to be chiefly Greeks with a sprinkling of Jews, to judge from the long coats some of them were wearing, and we could not make them understand anything beyond our wish to be landed at Moda, and to have our boat saved. We were without hats and outside garments, as already mentioned, and wet through, and our rescuers insisted upon lending us coats and hats.

There is a large collegiate building, belonging to some Catholic Teaching Association connected with French propaganda in Turkey, standing on the top of the cliffs above the landing-place. It was a fête day at the college and there was a crowd of people about the jetty when we landed. In our long, rusty, black coats and straw hats we looked veritable scarecrows, but we were prepared to meet jibes and laughter with stony indifference. We

solemnly stepped ashore after having given an address to the coxswain of the caique, and, stalking in single file, with features set in expressionless rigidity, we marched through the gaping spectators looking neither to the right nor left until we reached the Hobarts' door.

It was not without considerable difficulty that we obtained entrance, as the servant who came in answer to the bell refused to believe that we were the guests expected for luncheon. It was only when Miss Boyd, the Admiral's niece, hearing the altercation at the door came to see what was the matter, that we were allowed to enter. We had a laugh together when, with dry clothes supplied from the wardrobe of our host, we assembled round the tea-table and recounted our adventure.

## CHAPTER XXVI

## HOW WE PLACED THE LIGHTSHIP

My special work as head of the sub-committee was drawing to a close. All through 1868 and the greater part of 1869 I had been more or less constantly employed in journeys along the coast, running in and out of the Bosphorus and taking soundings in the Black Sea. With the aid of my friend, Ahmed Bey, I had all the proposed life-saving stations established along the inhospitable shores of the Black Sea, and the "beacons" erected. The rocket apparatus and life-boats required had been obtained through the agency of the Trinity House authorities, and by the same channel the services were procured of experts for the management of the lightship and life-boats, and the training of Turkish seamen for service afloat and ashore.

The lightship and her special fittings, the lantern, the fog signal apparatus, and the heavy mooring chains and anchors were supposed to be on their way. The dockyard authorities were consulted as to the date when she could be delivered to the commission complete in all respects, and it was fixed for a somewhat distant day in the early part of September. The date for the first exhibition of the lights had to be widely advertised beforehand, and it was necessary that the lightship should be in position by that date. I knew pretty well, however, by this time, the people with whom I had to deal, and so I added another three weeks to the suggested date, and drew up "a Notice to Mariners" about the

“Black Sea Light-vessel” and the “beacons” which was widely circulated, principally in the Black Sea ports. At last everything was complete on board. The vessel had been sent up to Kavak, and trials made of the lamps and reflectors, and of the “fog bell” which was started and kept going by clockwork arrangement when required in thick weather.

There were still ten days to spare, and feeling a bit seedy I had gone down to Prinkipo for a little change. It turned out to be a touch of malaria, which I must have caught during my last inspection visit along the Anatolian Coast, when I had imprudently bathed in the sun one hot afternoon. Feeling very wretched I sent for the navigator of the *Stationnaire*, and arranged with him to take the lightship out and place her in position. To my great dismay, the following day I received a wire from him stating that the vessel had been ordered to Smyrna to embark cases of the architectural remains from the Temple of Diana, and was leaving within forty-eight hours.

As there was no one else to whom I could entrust the work, there was nothing for me but to pull myself together and get up to Kavak. It was well that I had done so, as affairs were in a very troubled condition when I reached there. It only wanted five days to the date of “lighting up,” and there was the ship, with her crew of Turks ready to bolt at any moment, in spite of the high pay which had induced them to accept service on board. A gale from the north-east had set in, and the big waves rolling down the Bosphorus past Kavak had washed away all their courage.

Thanks to a “guard-boat” rowing round the ship night and day, they were kept on board, and with the assurances they received from Ahmed Bey and myself that the two “Ingleez” (English) “Captains” would be with them, and that it was their

"kismet," they accepted the situation at last with resignation. For myself I looked apprehensively at the weather and the falling barometer, and the wretched old small paddle steamer, the *Pesindideh*, which had brought up the light vessel and was waiting to tow her out to her moorings.

On examining her gear I found only one rope for towing purposes of any size, and it was an old "hawser" with one of its strands badly chafed. I had reached the ship on a Monday evening, and the next day I sent an officer down with a letter to Saleh Pasha the President of the Commission, giving him a report on the situation, and stating that I must have another steam vessel of some sort to assist in towing the lightship out to her position. I also asked for other tow ropes, new ones if possible, to be sent up to Kavak. Wednesday night arrived, and the officer had neither returned nor sent any news as to the result of his errand.

It was blowing as hard as ever all through Thursday. I had sent another officer down in the morning, and he also failed to return. I was getting very anxious when Friday came, and there were still no signs of the weather moderating. However, an Italian tug-boat which had been out to the mouth of the Bosphorus on the lookout for any "lame duck" which might require assistance, came into Kavak, and I promptly sent for her skipper. He seemed a decent fellow but he played me false, as, after having made a bargain with me to help us to tow the lightship out on the morrow, he cleared before noon and left me in the lurch. I was sorry then that I had not gone down to Constantinople myself, but ever before my eyes had been the fear that if I went away, the officers and engineers of the paddle steamer would leave upon some excuse or other, vigilance would relax, and the crew of the lightship would be allowed to vanish.

The lightship had to be in position and her lights in full

illumination at sunset the next day, and I determined that it should not be my fault if it were not so. I pointed out to Ahmed Bey the great responsibility that would rest upon our shoulders if we did not do all in our power to get the vessel there in time. Ships would be approaching the Bosphorus in the full confidence of seeing the guiding lights, and failing to do so would run ashore. We should be held responsible for all the loss of life and damage. It would be useless to plead inability for the answer would be : " Did you try ? " My arguments prevailed with him as well as with the old Captain of the paddle steamer. Ahmed Bey harangued the engineers and crew, and it was settled to have steam up at midnight.

Fortunately that day saw the end of the gale. The wind went down after sunset, and there was little of it when we moved out of the tiny harbour with the lightship in tow just after midnight. But a big sea was still rolling in from outside and we could make little headway. I had doubled the " hawser "—fortunately a long one—so that we should still have a hold upon her should the defective part carry away. The distance between us was, however, rather short for the height of the big rollers, and occasionally the light-vessel was " snubbed " into the one we had passed over just as we were mounting the next.

I sat on the bridge, conning the craft as well as I could by an old compass of which I knew nothing in regard to its errors of deviation. I did it, in fact, by instinct, with one eye always upon the " tow-rope " under the sway of a superstitious feeling that if I lost sight of it for only a second, it would break, and then good-bye to the light vessel and all hope of ever seeing one moored in the Black Sea. As the wind abated, drizzling rain set in, obscuring everything, so that after getting a few miles away from the land nothing could be seen of it. There were no landmarks by

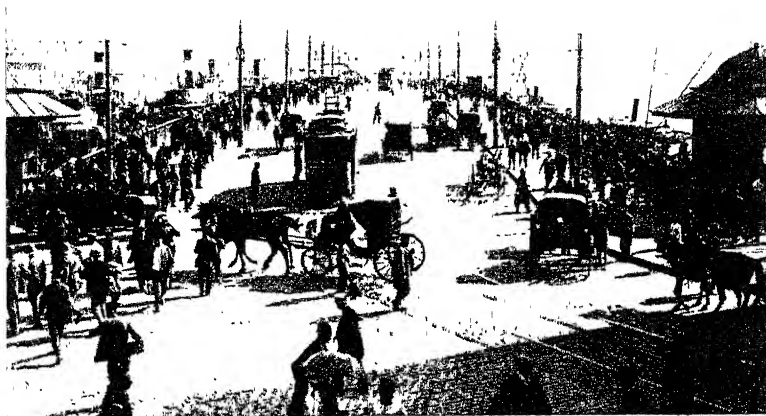
which to direct my course, and I could not trust the compass altogether. But fortunately my summer's work had furnished me with a mental plan of the "bottom" of the channel running from the "deep" of the Black Sea, through the foreshore banks into the Bosphorus, and with the use of the lead I was able to keep in the right direction. With my one eye still fixed upon the "hawser," I scanned the patent lead with the other, noting the registered depth and the nature of the stuff brought up by the tallow upon it, and it showed me where I was going.

It was a great strain for the first few hours, but as we drew away from the entrance the "rollers" grew less in size, and I felt more confident. It took us, however, more than thirteen hours to do the fifteen miles. At last the lead showed seventy-five fathoms, and I hurriedly hailed the lightship and told them to let go the anchor. The heavy umbrella-shaped anchor plunged into the water, the frigate-sized cable rattled out of the "hawse pipe" and the lightship was soon riding with two hundred and seventy fathoms of chain out, more than half of it lying on the bottom. The two Englishmen—fine fellows they were—did the whole of the work. The Turkish crew were all *hors de combat*—most of them out of sight below, and only a few of them still on deck, invoking Allah as they paid tribute to Neptune. I kept near at hand until all work with the cable was over, and then, having received the assurances of the two chiefs of the lightship\* that they were all right and that

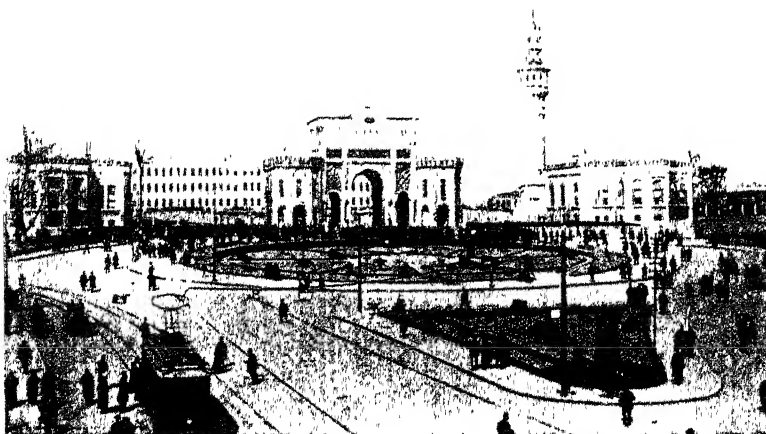
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\* These two men, whose names were James Mathewson and Richard Stavers, were both at that time in the Light Vessel Service of the Trinity House. James Mathewson, who was born in 1809 and entered the Trinity House Service in 1837, was Master of the *Princes Channel* Lightship in the Thames Estuary. Richard Stavers, who was born in 1814 and entered the Trinity House Service in 1849, was a Lamplighter on the Kentish Knock Light Vessel in the Thames Estuary. Mathewson was appointed First Officer and Stavers was appointed Second Officer of the Light Vessel in the Black Sea, which was nominally commanded by a





GALATA BRIDGE.  
FROM GALATA LOOKING TOWARD SPAMBOUL.



THE "SERASKERAT."  
(TURKISH WAR OFFICE.)



they would be able to manage the lights by themselves, I ordered the Captain of the old paddler to make for the Bosphorus, and we left the two plucky fellows to their lonely vigil.

The doses of quinine I had taken, and the excitement over the placing of the lightship, had apparently made me all right, and I went down to Constantinople with a light heart. I got the Captain to land me at Kadikieui, and went off to see some friends living there from whom I knew I should receive a hearty welcome. To my great astonishment, the words of welcome of my friends were rapidly followed by expressions of their regret at the great disaster which had happened to the lightvessel. Then, in answer to my hurried query as to what they meant, I learnt that the day before, the report had circulated through Galata (the shipping quarter of Constantinople) that the vessel had been struck by a passing steamer in the night, and was thought to have foundered, as she was seen no more.

Two days after, when the weather conditions were favourable, I went out to the lightship and made the necessary observations for fixing her exact position on the chart. To my great satisfaction I found that I had made a very good shot, and there was no necessity to move her at all from the place where I anchored her, as it were, in the dark.

I was also very pleased to learn from the two lightship superintendents that the men had been getting their sea-legs and were taking well to their work. It was an unusually stormy winter that year, and gale after gale followed in rapid succession, but

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Master who had already been appointed by the Imperial Ottoman Government. James Mathewson remained in the service of the Turkish Government until May 1st, 1885, when he returned to England and was retired on pension. He died on November 1st, 1896. Richard Stavers remained in the service of the Turkish Government certainly until November, 1877, and probably till a later date, but the Trinity House records do not appear to contain any information as to what ultimately became of him.

the lightship proved a good "road sign," and enabled many which might otherwise have gone ashore to reach the Bosphorus in safety. About a fortnight, however, after I had placed her, I received a hasty summons from the Embassy. I found Sir Henry Barron, the Chargé d' Affaires, in a very excited condition. "Woods," he said, "the lightship is gone, lost with all her people!" "How is that, sir," I asked, and I heard in reply the most beautiful *canard* imaginable. A Greek captain, he told me, had just been to the Embassy to give particulars of the disaster. The crew had lost their courage, and, slipping the cables, had tried to reach the Bosphorus. They had failed to do so, the vessel had drifted to the eastward and been driven ashore upon the rocks of Shillee. She had broken up and all hands had perished. He had seen the wreckage of the vessel and the bodies of the unfortunate English crew. So there could be no doubt of it, remarked Sir Henry, as, winding up his tragic tale, he asked me what was to be done to avert further disaster to vessels coming down from Russia.

A moment's reflection and it wasn't long before I had the *canard* stripped of its gayest plumage. "Were there any survivors?" I asked.

"No," answered Sir Henry, "he told me every one of the crew had been drowned."

"Then, sir, how did he get hold of his circumstantial yarn about the slipping of the cables and the attempt to reach the Bosphorus? Another question I would like to ask, Sir Henry, is: How many bodies of Englishmen did he say he saw?"

"There were six or eight of them, and all English, he told me," was the answer I received.

So I summed up the evidence at once, and greatly relieved our Chargé d' Affaires' mind by declaring it all pure invention.

The very next day appeared in the local British paper a most

eulogistic article about the Black Sea light-vessel from a grateful master of a grain steamer, which, "hove to" in a gale of wind, had been knocking about for hours. Uncertain of his position, he was doing his best to prevent any further approach to the coast, when he suddenly caught sight of the two bright lights, and, joyfully "wearing ship," found his way into the Bosphorus.

I was telling this story of the lightship some twenty years or so afterwards, to a few interested guests at my dinner-table, and wound up with the remark: "And there she is now riding at the same anchor with the same cable. She has never budged from where I anchored her and never will." The very next day the news arrived at our Consulate that the lightship had broken away from her moorings, and was lying at anchor a few miles off-shore. It was fortunately summer weather at the time, and it was not long before she was once more back in her station.